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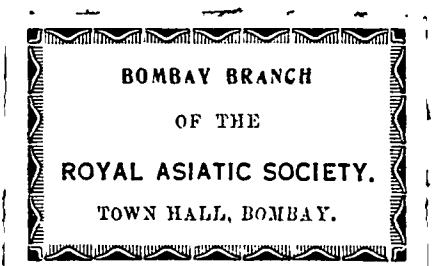

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THE

CORRESPONDENCE

OF

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

VOL. II.

THE

CORRESPONDENCE

OF

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

23648

EDITED BY HIS SONS,

ROBERT ISAAC WILBERFORCE, M.A.

VICAR OF EAST FARLEIGH, LATE FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE;

AND

SAMUEL WILBERFORCE, M.A.

ARCHDEACON OF SURREY, RECTOR OF BRIGHSTONE.

As he had a great number of friends of the best men, so no man had ever the confidence to avow himself to be his enemy. — LORD CLARENDON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CORRESPONDENCE

OF

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO RT. HON. WM. PITT.

Lyme, January 1, 1805.

My dear Pitt,

I heard lately from Samuel Thornton of his having an interview with you concerning the collectorship at Hull; and I have ever since been rather uneasy, lest, from not exactly taking, or quite accurately representing my meaning, in that part of the transaction in which *you* come into question, he may have exhibited to you (unintentionally of course) a false notion of my sentiments and feelings. I will not make speeches; but I can truly assure you, that so far as you are personally concerned, there is scarcely any man living of whom I would more freely ask, or could more satisfactorily receive any favour; but being connected with a county which used to be estimated by Sir George Savile at about one eighth or one ninth of all England, unless I had laid down to myself the rule of declining to ask favours for my constituents, there never would have been a week in which I should not have had to

pester you with some solicitation or other; and I am sure your own feelings will instruct you that this would have been a situation equally destructive of all political independence, or (what I value highly in your case) all personal comfort, and the continuance of that friendly connection, which (though I have never, I believe, said so civil a thing to you before) I esteem as a source of high honour to myself, and of great satisfaction. Even with my rule, I have at one time or other been asked for favours by most of my chief Yorkshire friends, but they have always most honourably acquiesced with good humour in my declining to oblige them. But the case would have been wholly different, if I had not had this rule to plead . . . Of course, all this time I except all those situations which, from their connection with the county or place he represents, every M. P. is naturally consulted about filling, from his supposed knowledge of the characters, &c. of the people of the place . . . I really have been uncomfortable ever since I heard of that interview with you, from the fear lest this had not been distinctly stated; and you will, therefore, excuse my taking up so much of your time as the explanation has required.

The distance of this place from London is such, that I cannot well (as I travel with all my family) get up in time for the House on Tuesday, if I set off on Monday. And as I don't like to stay a Sunday on the road, and never travel on Sunday, except in a case of *great* and unavoidable necessity, I should be forced to leave this place in the middle of next week, unless you could dispense with my attendance on the first day. In

general, there is no question then, and of late there has been little conversation either, so that I think if I were up on Wednesday (the 16th) or Thursday, it would do very well. I write to you, because I know you won't summon me up on the day (Tuesday) without necessity; if it be really desirable that I should come, I certainly will (if it please God), but I have reasons connected with health and family convenience, for rather desiring to remain here as long as I can, and hope not to travel during this very severe weather: of course I myself should wish to be up, if a very full attendance were required; and I only ask you, because of that you can best judge. Remember there is nobody here to copy after my example. I have often heard of you, and was in hopes, from the papers, you were taking a little Bath water before the meeting. I trust Lord Harrowby goes on well. I am much interested for him.

Believe me sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P.S. One single line or even word (stay or come*) will do.

REV. SAMUEL MARSDEN TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

New South Wales, Parramatta, January 2, 1805.

Honoured Sir,

As Mr. Robert Campbell, who has been a resident merchant in N. S. Wales many years, is returning

* Vide Mr. Pitt's answer, *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 208.

to Europe, I embrace the opportunity to give you a line by him.

His object in returning to England is to arrange some commercial affairs, and then return.

I do not know that it will be in your power to forward his wishes; if it should, I shall feel myself particularly obliged for any attention you may pay to him. Mr. Campbell has been a real friend to this colony, and I cannot say too much in his behalf. He returns to England in a ship called the Lady Barlow, with a cargo of oil and skins. This is the first cargo procured by the inhabitants of N. S. Wales, and is the beginning of the commerce of a new world. On that account I hope it will meet with countenance and support from Government.

As we now abound with the necessaries of life, some article of commerce must be suggested by Government in order to find employment for the people. We have wheat sufficient for more than two years now in the colony, and have no market for it. Perhaps the fishery is the only object that at present offers employment for the labouring people. The settlers begin to feel the want of a market for their surplus grain very much; and will be greatly distressed for every thing excepting bread and meat, unless commerce can be made to supply their wants. This is a consideration of great importance for the future welfare of this colony. But on this subject I refer you to Mr. Campbell.

I am happy to inform you that there has, for some time past, been more attention paid to the Sabbath than at any former period. I attribute this to your kind

interference with his Majesty's ministers. I am so perfectly acquainted with the disposition of those in high situations here, that I am sure no reformation in this respect would originate from them. I need not tell you how much I want an assistant. The colony becomes more extensive daily. My duty is very hard. It is more than four years now since Mr. Johnson returned, and no clergyman sent out. I have still to lament the want of a church at head-quarters: one is begun, but when it will be finished I know not. The Orphan Institution goes on well. We have lately made accommodation for about fifty girls more than the school would contain at first. I am persuaded it will be attended with the greatest benefit to this settlement, and rescue a great number of unprotected females from ruin. A school of Industry and Education for boys is very much wanted; numbers are living in idleness and vice, who might be employed in some honest trade, if a public building was erected for their reception. I hope to see this done at some future period.

I am persuaded, if there was no clergyman here, this colony would be a much greater scene of sin and iniquity than it is. A minister of religion, particularly in N. S. Wales, where he is known by every person in the settlement, and personally knows almost every person, stands as a barrier against the overflowings of sin and ungodliness. Though I cannot say much apparent good is done by my public ministry, yet I know much real evil is prevented. The power that changes the heart belongs to God. It is a great consolation to me, amidst all my difficulties, to know and feel that I am

in the very place where Divine Wisdom would have me be. That the Divine blessing may rest upon you and yours is the sincere prayer of,

Honoured Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

SAMUEL MARSDEN.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO M. B.

London, February 1, 1805.

My dear Friend,

Poor ———'s letter is really dark and black beyond all degrees of darkness; if there were not certain chinks through which the light breaks in, and shows that the sombre hue is not so much the natural complexion of the incidents she relates, as that which arises from the temper of the relater. When we are becoming the prey of these minor troubles, it is a good plan to look from home (so to express it), and to fix our eyes on those who are suffering the real solid evils of life. A poor woman is just gone from me, whose husband and child, about four years ago, were forced by *starving* into St. Giles's Workhouse. There they both died of fever, and the woman herself caught the disease. The physician from whom I heard the melancholy tale, being told there was somebody ill in the house, tried to get in by knocking, but no one coming to the door, he forced his way in, and found this poor woman delirious, and three or four children about her. Last night I saw

her again for the first time since that dreadful season. She had fallen into debt for rent, the parish having almost taken away the allowance for her three children, and was in imminent danger of having all her goods seized. On inquiring how she maintained herself, I found it was by going out every night about eleven, and selling saloop till morning to hackney-coachmen, and others who keep unreasonable hours. Yet really this poor woman was not plaintive.

I did not mean to tell you so long a story, but it forced itself on my pen. Remember, my dear friend, concerning all those petty difficulties which may molest you, that ten years hence it will signify very little how the points may have been determined, one way or the other; and never harass yourself more than enough on any principle of economy, but remember, that to spend seven shillings' worth of health and spirits, in order to save four shillings' worth of silver, is a most extravagant proceeding. Above all, learn to cast your care on God, who careth for you; in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, letting your requests be made known unto Him. Our blessed Lord knows our infirmities, for He has felt them, and therefore He is the more disposed to bear with them, or rather we may be the more assured of His thus graciously sympathising with us. * * * *

WM. COOKSON, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Docketted — " Merchants' sentiments and feelings on Woollen Manufacture."]

Leeds, February 5, 1805.

Dear Sir,

I suppose you now settled in London quarters, and your time at the disposal of every claimant except yourself. Our clothiers* will, perhaps, be at you again, as I hear they are in motion, and a printed address was handed round the Cloth Halls a few days ago, instigating them to move again, and suggesting the old train of arguments. I had secured one for you, but I have mislaid it: however, it contains no new argument or matter whatever, and I really hope they will desist from any further pursuit of their impracticable objects for want of funds.

The domestic system, as they call it, sounds well enough, but that is all: every part except the weaving is performed at public mills; and if the legislature could be prevailed upon to say that cloth weavers shall not work together beyond a given number, the owners of factories can so readily divide their shops into dwelling-houses around them, containing each the limited number of looms, under the management of one person and his family as subworkmen, that no end proposed by the clothiers could accrue. But whilst in every other county, and in every branch of manufacture, a master may employ as many weavers as he can find work for, and

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 264.

to prevent peculation, and ensure precise observance of time and order, can congregate his weavers as his judgment recommends, it is not very likely that any restrictions and fetters should be imposed on the Yorkshire clothier only. The lower class of clothiers require that no man who has capital, enterprise, and ability, sources from which all our improvements and superiority in British manufactures arise, shall be allowed to exercise them in Yorkshire, unless he has been apprentice for seven years, or is a clothier's son. The domestic system is held up in a very imposing light; but if in a true one in respect of morality, would that be a reason for shackling Yorkshire men and Yorkshire property only? If the capitalists really have an advantage, how would morality be promoted by merely expelling them into other counties? But, believe me, the domestic system has no effectual weight in this matter: the number of master clothiers has increased in full proportion with the factories; and were I called upon to give my opinion on oath, I should say, that in respect of one third or more of the master clothiers, the interests of morality and the comfort of their families would be infinitely better promoted by their being employed under some opulent owner of a factory than as they now are. The lower order of clothiers buy every thing at the dearest: they are taken from home twice a week to attend markets,—frequently attend two and six days without selling at all, and far too commonly spend too much of their time and money in public-houses. The number who return home intoxicated every market day is very considerable, and chiefly among the lower class of masters;

their anxiety to sell, and their inexperience, exposes this class continually to the plausible depredations of swindling buyers, and their necessities (to find the means of paying their wages, and for their purchases) expose great numbers every year to the fangs of the law. Then their families are ruined. But if they can be *set on* by some opulent manufacturer, the comfortable state of that family on the comparison has greatly gained. The father, mother, and each child above nine years of age, can have regular work for six days in the week: their real earnings far exceed those of the former state, are regularly paid on the Saturday night, and the alehouse only is the loser. When each master had his wool scribled, carded, and spun at home, the domestic system had a meaning: now even the weaving is very much hired out. With respect to the gig mill, which in fact bears no sort of affinity to what was so called in old times, the operation is just as much superior to hand raising, as the machine frame to the old spinning-wheel. To equal it by hand work our dressers find impossible: the competition to come any way near it occasions them so much care, that they boldly lay down a law that "*we shall not use a gig*," and apply to Parliament to give their mandate a legal sanction.

As these old obsolete acts are now to be the subject of inquiry and revision, we have another grievance of antique date to remove. Wire cards, as made one hundred years ago, might injure the texture of the cloth in the dressing. Now cards are made so fine, so flexible, the fibres operating on the surface of the cloth so much more close and numerous, as to render

the effect upon fine cloth in particular infinitely superior. Yet we have searchers sworn to visit our dressing shops, and to give information if we are *detected* in the use of any cards, and two very respectable houses were fined three weeks ago on this account — fined for doing what is done in every other county, and for using an implement without which the cloth cannot be dressed properly. These searchers have some of them the good sense to stay away, and give notice, "Lads, the searcher is coming." But how is this performing their duty on oath? The prevalent opinions here are, that you are to have a very turbulent winter campaign in Parliament. Grenvilles, Foxes, Fitzwilliams, Norfolks, Portlands, &c. will find ways and means to disturb ministers at every step, and so far I have no doubt of their doing Buonaparte's business to the best of their power gratis. Hitherto at least, I am of opinion that we are almost unanimous in our disposition to support ministers, and in our censure of the motives and principles of opposition. Lord Fitz. will, no doubt, strain all his powers with the dissenters (whose attachment he particularly cultivates in this Riding), but I trust he will not be able to put them in motion.

Trade is "pretty fairish," and except a part of the master clothiers of the lesser order, we are very quiet on that score.

I remain, on all occasions, very truly, dear Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM COOKSON.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO M. B.

London, March 4, 1805.

My dear ——,

It happened most unfortunately *, that your letter arrived on Thursday, and the fatal event of that night really so engrossed my mind that I forgot you and all my other correspondents, not having read your letter or others, which lay in my writing-box till yesterday, when seeing your handwriting I took it up and read it, and I seldom have been so much hurt as I was by finding your vexatious situation. Observe that till last night I never read your letter or several others I had received at the same time.

Now for the rest. Ever since I came out of my dressing-room this morning, I have been in one continual crowd, as, indeed, I am at this very moment; but I cannot bear to suffer your letter to remain a single post unanswered after my knowledge of its contents. Be assured, however, my dear ——, that the serious shape this affair takes in your eyes is chiefly to be ascribed to the state of your health, and to your unprotected situation without any confidential adviser of our sex. I will gladly write you any preamble you desire; but to-day, and also I fear to-morrow, I have not a moment: and further, I distrust my own powers, because I know not the circumstances of the case. Would not the better way be, for you to apply to the Vicar, with whom you

* Defeat of the Abolition Bill.—Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 212.

seem to be on good terms, or to some gentleman in the neighbourhood, and get them who know all circumstances, and for what class of readers what you write is intended, to draw out the case for you. I should think, uninformed as I am, that the preamble should be merely a few words, stating, that it having reached your ears that reports have been in circulation concerning the misapplication of the funds of the school, you have judged it right to print and circulate the statement of the accounts as the best contradiction of any such false assertion; for I understand you, luckily, to have kept accounts, which you might have happened not to do. How I grieve for you! — As for your expenses, I can without any inconvenience spare you any sum you may want, if there should be any awkwardness or embarrassment on that head.

If any prosecution take place it ought to be the act of your advisers, not your own. And I strongly recommend it to you to go to any gentlemen near you whom you can well get access to, and lay before them your gross and shameful injuries, — calling on them to protect from unjust and malicious oppression a helpless female. I hope the age of chivalry, or rather something better, is not so passed but that you would find some ready to aid you.

Yours ever,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE RT. HON. WM. PITT.

[Private.]

Palace Yard, March 30, 1805.
Saturday Morning.

My dear Pitt,

Bankes informs me that you told him you should be particularly engaged this morning: I, therefore, take up my pen to state to you that the general sense of a meeting of the parliamentary friends of the abolition of the Slave Trade, which took place yesterday morning*, seemed to be (what I am sure you must concur in), that in the present state of the question, it was peculiarly important not to sustain another defeat in the House of Commons; but, on the contrary, that we should endeavour, if possible, to prove that we were not as weak as people may be led to infer from our late disaster. On this account, it was of extreme moment to choose our measure well, and of several which lay open to us to bring forward that which was most likely to be carried. The general inclination seemed to be in favour of the measure of stopping the Guiana Slave Trade; of which measure it is one manifest recommendation, that requiring only one debate and division it would not afford our opponents the same opportunities of taking us by surprise, which are given in the several stages of a bill. But on my telling them that this measure was under the consideration of government, and that I had good reason to believe it would speedily be carried into exe-

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 217.

cution, they all seemed to acquiesce in the force of the reasons I assigned, why it was far better that the measure should appear the spontaneous determination of government, rather than the result of a proceeding in parliament; even supposing it was there to receive the support of *all* the members of government. You will see, however, that I could not say to them all I knew on this subject, though there appeared no reason against my telling them, in substance, the actual state of the affair. No determination was come to in the end; but Bankes and myself were desired 'to state to you the general opinion, and to learn from you whether you preferred the parliamentary or the ministerial mode (these, of course, are my words, not theirs), and there is to be another meeting on Wednesday morning to decide what measure shall be brought forward, after consulting you. I am myself desirous of trying the measure of stopping the foreign Slave Trade. But I will tell you more when I see you, and can do it with a less consumption of your time. As Lord Camden told me yesterday afternoon that all was ready for your perusal, I hope the decision need not take your cabinet a quarter of an hour, if once fairly brought before them. Lord Mulgrave, who was present when I spoke with Lord Camden, expressed no disapprobation at all of this measure. I am ever,

My dear Pitt,

Yours very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P.S. The meeting yesterday was a private meeting

of none but the chief members of parliament who had been friendly to the measure, and on the whole all went off very civilly and well. It is much my wish that some measure, if not of a general nature, should be brought forward by some other person. Lord Henry Petty stands well with the House, and is the person I should prefer. Barham hinted that the Suspension might be brought forward by somebody who had never yet taken any part in the business publicly at all; but he did not name the man.

SIR CHAS. MIDDLETON, BART. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Teston, April 15, 1805.

My dear Friend,

From a perusal of the papers I sent you, it is plain, that in our best days of promises, the good of the public was a very weak stimulus in the minds of ministers.

Had it been otherwise, the committees that have been formed for the ostentatious purposes of reform would not have been wanted.

I have seen a very intimate friend of poor Lord Melville's since we parted. He has seen all his private papers; and he assures me, that independent of the Admiralty, he has not at this moment more than 2000*l.* per annum clear.

I do therefore hope you will use your good offices in

breaking the fall of this poor man, and prevent the persecution with which he is pursued by an unfeeling opposition.

Let it be considered, that however guilty in the present instance, the public has suffered no loss, and when we consider the many years he has devoted to the service of his country with indefatigable zeal, it ought to weigh largely in the scale of public justice.

Keep all this in mind, and his present sufferings. Any kindness from you will be greatly valued.

I feel for him most tenderly, and although I approve of the sentence, I cannot help lamenting the effect it will have on naval matters.

Yours very affectionately,

CHAS. MIDDLETON.

RT. HON. SPENCER PERCEVAL TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

April 15, 1805.

Dear Wilberforce,

You will perceive that you have given me no little trouble in drawing up the accompanying papers. I fear I shall give you as much in reading them, but I really have not time to copy them out in a more legible shape, though I much wish that I had, as I feel it to be of extreme importance that you should view this subject rightly, and therefore I could wish to lay before you my ideas upon it in the most advantageous shape. You

must excuse the errors which great haste has occasioned, and you will perceive that it is evidently in a shape in which I could not expose it but in confidence to the most friendly eye. Long as the paper is, I am sorry to say that in many parts at least it represents the skeleton only of my reasons. I think, however, that your imagination and understanding will fill up and clothe my skeleton as well as I could do. I beg you will bring the papers with you to dinner on Thursday. If I can have any advantage from my trouble beyond that of showing my inclination to possess you with my ideas upon the subject, and to profit by your counter-observations, it will be that of having put into somewhat more of a connected shape my argument upon the question than it otherwise might have assumed; and as, if I speak upon the subject, it may possibly be in some degree in the same order, you will see an additional reason for keeping the paper to yourself.

The order I have pursued is this (it may perhaps help you in reading it): — I insist first that the state has the right to exclude from office, &c. on account of religious opinions; next, I suppose it will be contended that, admitting the state to have the right, it is only with a view to its security. That it would therefore be a tyrannous use of that right to exercise it when such exclusion was no longer necessary for the security of the state, and that it is still less justifiable when there are several grounds of policy and expediency against it, that there is now no danger from popery, and that the objects which will be advanced will be, to conciliate and satisfy the Roman Catholics, to reconcile the

different sects to each other, to tranquillise Ireland, and to encourage and promote Christian charity and toleration. In answer to this I endeavour to show, 1. That there is danger from popery if it should increase; and, 2. That there is danger of its increasing. Then I endeavour to show that, even supposing none or little danger from popery, yet, that these objects of policy could not be obtained by it; that the Roman Catholics could not be satisfied by any thing short of establishment, if by that; that the people to be benefited by any thing short of it are not those who are disaffected, but those that are loyal, and therefore that no political object of that kind could be gained; that the establishment of the Roman Catholic would be so far from tranquillising Ireland, that it would alienate the Protestant from parliament, would bring him and the Roman Catholic into a state of more vigorous and rancorous conflict, and therefore tend more to revive religious animosity and inflame a spirit of intolerance, than promote toleration; and from these grounds I conclude that there is nothing that can do good but to let the Roman Catholic know that he has got as much as a Protestant parliament can give him, and that he must be contented.

Yours very truly,

S. Perceval.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LADY WALDEGRAVE.

London, April 15, 1805.

My dear Lady W.

I can truly declare amid all the hurley-burley of the scene in which I have been bearing a part, I was often in heart at Navestock; and could I have transported myself thither with a thought, your Ladyship would have had a personal proof of my remembrance. During our late Parliamentary warfare, my private business accumulated on me, so that I now have at my elbow a formidable pile of letters unanswered, and many of them unread. But friendship at least in this holiday season shall have the precedence of business, and before I begin to reply to my Yorkshire correspondents, I will send your Ladyship a few lines; not that I have anything to say, which will not already have occurred to you, but you appeared to wish to hear from me, and I myself feel desirous of pouring forth a part of the effusions to which your late domestic incidents naturally give rise.

I will frankly own that I can borrow one of your own expressions, and say that I was also "surprised at the awful calamity."* And yet I know not why, because we can see so little of the designs and purposes of the Almighty, that it is the grossest presumption in us short-sighted creatures of a day to conceive that He will or will not act in any particular manner. Perhaps the sentiment in which my surprise bottomed (to be quite unreserved) was, that you had

* The death of her daughter.

already suffered so much, that it was utterly unlikely that another stroke scarcely less severe than any of the former should succeed. But when we resort to our Bible (and where else can we go, either for wisdom or consolation?) we find any such sentiment suppressed on its first rising, by the most plain and positive assurances, that "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth;" that these visitations, however grievous for a time, are often productive of everlasting benefit and joy; that God can even in this life more than compensate for any earthly loss, by the consolations of His spirit, by "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Nor are we in the present instance left so much in the dark as not to see many at least probable and apparent ends which this afflicting dispensation may have been intended to answer. And in all such cases, it is our primary duty to ask ourselves what effects may the stroke have been designed to produce in me? Of what good consequences may it be rendered the instrument? And then we should set ourselves in earnest, (vigorously I mean) to the production of these consequences and effects. We are assured that "God is love," that He does not willingly afflict the children of men. Indeed, to say nothing of the blessings He is daily dispensing to a forgetful and ungrateful world, (what human patience would thus endure?) His giving up his own Son to endure all He underwent on earth, that He might thereby deliver as many as would repent and believe in Him from eternal misery, and procure for them never-ending happiness, is a proof of love so decisive, that it is no wonder the Apostle dwells on it

so confidently. It is indeed a demonstration of such unspeakable love, that we cannot doubt of God's readiness to grant us all other blessings, just as he on earth, who should be ready to lay down his life for us, would certainly not refuse us any small and trifling favour. Well, therefore, may St. Paul say, "He that spared not His own son," &c., "how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

But I insist upon this topic because in truth we are all of us sadly deficient here: we do not, if I may use such an expression, give God and our Redeemer half credit enough for love, and kindness, and sympathy. I have no doubt, much as your Ladyship may have lately felt for your daughter, that they feel for you and yours still more; but then there is this grand difference — you can see but a few links of the great chain of events, God sees the whole; He contemplates at once all the innumerable consequences, which, striking off, as lines from the centre, result from every particular event when taken in all their extent, complication, and variety. He therefore discerns an effect, which to our organs is not merely remote, but absolutely invisible, and yet perhaps an effect, which, if we could take it into account, would at once take away all our surprise, and render an incident which may have most astonished us perfectly natural. And all this becomes still more intelligible, when we take also into account what we are in practice sadly apt to forget — that the salvation of a single soul is in the Divine estimate of more importance than the temporal fate of empires; I mean in the latter case, abstracting all reference to spiritual and eternal

consequences. Suppose some person, whose very name is unknown to you, brought to serious reflection, by such a striking exhibition of the uncertainty of all human things, as your family has lately afforded. Suppose some mother, whose own endeavours may henceforth be directed to her daughter's or family's eternal interests, instead of their temporal advancement. Your Ladyship will follow the train of ideas which I have just introduced to you; but there are, as I said lately, some by no means improbable ends in this very dispensation, which we ourselves can discover. Of course I speak here with diffidence; yet so far as general principles go I cannot be wrong.

I humbly trust, and firmly believe, that the Almighty has graciously received you into the number of His people: your prayers have been fervently poured forth for dear Lady Maria's eternal happiness; and indeed I trust she was herself in such a state of acceptance with God, as may justly lead us to hope with humble confidence, that to her "Death gain." But would it have been always so? That is a question we cannot answer. I am no predestinarian, and do not believe that the children of God can never fall away; and how do we know but that the cares of life might have choked the word, to use our blessed Saviour's own expression, to the diminution at least, if not to the forfeiture and loss of her eternal happiness. I can imagine that Lady Maria would have had several very serious obstacles to her religious advancement to contend with.

But I must not particularise: my letter will otherwise grow into a pamphlet, and I must hasten to another topic — I mean the effect the incident is likely to have,

at least is calculated to have, on the survivors, especially on poor Mr. M.; there is scarcely any providential dispensation which is so often rendered the instrument of producing a happy effect on the hearts of men as the death of friends. I have known several who ascribe to it their own conversion. May the striking proof Mr. M. has had of the precariousness of all human enjoyments wean his mind from this world, and lead him to fix his heart on that inheritance which will never fail those who take it for their portion!

I enter into all your Ladyship's feelings for Lord W. and Mr. M., and indeed I can truly say I sympathise with you in them. Most true it is, as Mr. M. himself says, that a man may be as good a Christian when a soldier, as in any other line of life. The Holy Scriptures themselves contain some very encouraging confirmations of this position, and some most striking instances of its truth have been afforded of late years. Colonel Gardiner, in the whole of his story, appears to have been one of the most extraordinary proofs of the mercy of God, and of the efficacy of His grace, that ever was vouchsafed to men. Yet it cannot be denied that a military life, if not more unfavourable to religion than most others, (which I believe it to be in our days, for reasons I would specify but for want of time,) is yet beset with dangers, and has some peculiar temptations, or rather has them in a peculiarly great degree. If the state of the age in religion and morals be compared with that of our great-grandfathers (I speak of a century ago), it appears to me that there is now less of many of the grosser vices, and that morality is better understood;

but the grand peculiar evil of the present day is practical infidelity. How little are the Holy Scriptures read, how little are they understood. I do not, however, mean, that people in general are professed sceptics, or that they know themselves to be such. Many who in a general way believe the Bible to be of divine original, do not believe many of the great truths which it inculcates. There is at bottom, in the higher ranks especially, a profane self-sufficiency; and this produces a great indifference to religion. Honour is, in fact, the God of our idolatry; and where a character is formed on this basis, there is too generally a deep and real, though, perhaps, a disguised contempt for that lowliness and meekness of which our blessed Saviour exhibited so bright a specimen, and which the Apostles so strongly enforce on all His followers. Pride, pride is the universal passion; and yet pride is the vice which, in its essential nature and appropriate effects, is the most opposite to the genius and spirit of real Christianity. The true Christian's habitual temper must be a temper of humility; for he must daily prostrate himself at the foot of the Cross, and, acknowledging his unworthiness, must ask for pardon and grace to help him in his need; depending for both on his connection with the Saviour (I can scarcely keep from enlarging). But to return to my point. It is obvious that the principle of honour is even more absolute in the military class than in any other, and, therefore, that the peculiar danger of our times is that to which military men are peculiarly exposed. Still we must have military men, and, indeed, the strictest principles of self-defence call for an increase of them. My infe-

rence therefore is, that additional watchfulness is required, and additional firmness;—to dare to be singular, is always one of the greatest efforts of courage: but for a soldier to be singular, requires a still larger share of it. May the Almighty grant to your prayers (and I have the highest persuasion of the efficacy of prayer) the preservation of those who must ever be so dear to your Ladyship, from the contagion to which they will be exposed.

But, alas! the evil or rather danger is aggravated by another circumstance, that, in our days, nominal assumes the place and rank of real Christianity, and your Ladyship's young soldiers will hear the religion of the New Testament and the Reformation stigmatised with the title of methodism, enthusiasm, and other such disgraceful names; yet we are assured (and God cannot lie or change) that if we use the means of grace, prayer, and the reading of the Scriptures with honesty of mind, we shall be led into all truth, and carried safely through this dangerous world to that state of peace and joy which will be no less lasting in duration than perfect in degree. To these great duties, then, I would earnestly recommend your Ladyship to press your young men; and happy would it be, if they would now gratify you by promising to adhere to them steadily. A habit of this sort, once formed, will not be easily broken, and it is invaluable. I would particularly recommend the perusal of the New Testament—of all of it, I mean; for it is by a strange and most unhappy perverseness of judgment (if it be not owing to the heart) that many who read and contend for the perusal of the Gospels,

especially of the three first, seem to think they may, without much loss, neglect the Epistles and the Acts—and in fact St. John's Gospel also comes in for its share of neglect. Whereas, if people would consider the subject seriously and scripturally, they must allow, that the Epistles having been written after the Holy Spirit was poured forth in larger measure, and when the whole system of Christianity, and especially its peculiar doctrines, were more fully and particularly explained; *we* therefore ought to look to *them* —the Epistles and Acts, I mean—for the views of religion (especially of its doctrines, and of their application to practice) which we are bound to take, and the practical principles by which we ought to be actuated. I need not, I am sure, in writing to your Ladyship, vindicate myself from the charge of underrating any part of the Word of God—it is all of divine original and authority: but just as more was revealed in our Saviour's days than in those of Moses or of David, so more was revealed after our Saviour's ascension into heaven than before it. I will merely add, on this head, that I may mention as a striking illustration and proof of my position, that whereas, before our Saviour's death, Christians had asked nothing in His name,—after his Ascension, all our petitions were to be offered up in His name, and through His mediation and intercession. And can a greater change (a practical change, I mean) be well imagined.

This is a subject on which, for some years, I have been thinking of writing, and I still hope to effect it.

May I also recommend to my young friends...if they will allow me to call them so, whose title can only be

founded on the interest I take in their happiness... the practice of comparing one passage of Scripture with another in important cases. Having gone so far, I will take the liberty of pressing for the perusal of either Doddridge or Witherspoon on Regeneration. They are both excellent works, and there are also three excellent sermons on the same subject by Archbishop Tillotson. It will be remembered that Doddridge, though a Dissenter himself, was a confidential friend of bishops, and of the most respected friends of the establishment. But I must have tired your Ladyship's patience; and finding myself as far almost as when I began, from exhausting all I had to say to you, I will for the present lay down my pen, with assurances of the most cordial sympathy and friendship.

I hope it will not be very long before we may have the pleasure of seeing your Ladyship among us; and trusting to your Ladyship's and their acceptance of a cordial reception, as a compensation for any defects in ceremony, I add that Mrs. W. and I shall be happy to see Lord W. and Mr. M. with your Ladyship, whenever they may be so disposed; and Broomfield, to which we hope we are soon going, shall not be so preoccupied as to render it impossible for us to receive them.

For the present, my dear Lady W., accept Mrs. W.'s and my own sincere and warm wishes for your own present and eternal happiness, and that of all who are dear to you. THAT includes all the rest; and therefore I will only add, that I am, with truth,

Your Ladyship's faithful and
Affectionate Friend,
W. WILBERFORCE.

P.S. I regret to have been so extremely hurried as I have been during the last half-hour: but you will excuse it; and in truth it has been a great effort to secure for your Ladyship so much time in any way. For the books — let me know if you wish for any more. The account of the gallant Scotch regiment under Monro, was the book of which I begged Lord W.'s acceptance; and I only beg, that if ever he should part with it, it may be to me, because I don't know that I can get another copy, and I value it very highly. It is a very extraordinary performance, and the antiquity of the style and manners are, like the costume in the old paintings, great additions to the effect. Poor Bennet Langton, I remember, was in raptures with it.

I had some other sentiments to express, but could not put them down now, and my unanswered letters are multiplying daily, even during the recess, instead of being cleared away. I am a general bankrupt.

Poor Lord Melville! I find I am abused extremely, especially by the ladies; — but let them be a little serious.

JOHN GISBORNE, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Holly Bush, near Burton, April 17, 1805.

Dear Sir,

As your Easter vacation is arrived, I venture to trouble you with a letter upon a subject which has of late been very frequently in my thoughts, and concern-

ing which I really feel much anxiety. When my friend Dr. Randolph (with whom I know you are acquainted) was here in the summer of 1803, he gave me an extremely interesting account of his interview with the late Lord Rosslyn at Bath, and though you may be in full possession of the particulars to which I now allude, yet I feel assured that you will not be displeased with my just running over the chief of them. The Doctor had no acquaintance with Lord R. before his Lordship's last visit to Bath, and probably they would never have been acquainted, but for the happy circumstance of Lady Rosslyn's regular attendance at Laura Chapel. One morning after service, her Ladyship requested with much earnestness, that he (the Doctor) would call on her Lord, as she very much wished them to be acquainted; intimating pretty strongly, if my memory does not deceive me, that she hoped the Doctor would seize every opportunity of introducing religion in the course of their conversation. The Doctor complied, and during the first four or five of their interviews, his Lordship eagerly entered upon the proofs, external and internal, of Christianity; and, to use Randolph's own expression, "invariably took the infidel side of the question." His Lordship managed his arguments, I believe, with much dexterity, and Randolph confessed that he never found himself more closely pressed. Lord R., however, was in perfect temper, and appeared evidently on the search for truth, which subsequent circumstances served fully to prove. After several interviews his Lordship requested Dr. R. to recommend to him some eminent work upon the divinity of Christ, and

Burgh's Answer to Lindsey was accordingly put into his hands. This book (which I have never seen), under the blessing of God, seems to have been the one thing needful: for his Lordship repeatedly avowed his entire change of views and the extinction of his doubts, from the serious perusal of this work. He then expressed his anxiety that Dr. Randolph should write to Burgh, requesting that the work might be reprinted, and that a preface might be inserted by him addressed to his Lordship, declaratory of his Lordship's delight, gratitude, &c. &c. Lord Rosslyn also declared that he especially wished such a preface to be inserted, from the ardent hope that it might awaken curiosity in the minds of his law brethren, and thus excite their desire to peruse a work which had accomplished such a change in his own breast. Surely all this is delightful and satisfactory. When Lord R. was preparing to leave Bath, he took leave of Randolph in these words: "I thank you cordially for all your visits; I came to Bath an Infidel, but I return from it a real Believer." Being in possession of these facts, and Lord Rosslyn being no more, I wrote lately to Randolph, requesting him, if he had no objection, to relate the interesting particulars of his interviews with the late Lord Rosslyn, in a suitable letter to the editor of the Christian Observer, as I trusted they would thus get into circulation, and be of use. My friend thus replies to my request: "You are perfectly correct with regard to Lord Rosslyn; and the remembrance of what passed is now most pleasing. I care not how often the story be told; but as no attack has been made on his religious principles, I do not think myself

authorised to volunteer the detail." I confess that, under all the circumstances, I do not see why Randolph should feel any scruple about volunteering the detail; and as to my friend's remark upon no attack having been made on his Lordship's religious principles, I can only say that the generality of people believe he had none.

Had not the subject of this letter been apparently of some moment, I should have long ago offered many apologies for so intruding upon your time; and I must even now express a concern that I have not been able to compress what I had to say in a narrower compass.

I remain, dear Sir,

Your much obliged and obedient

J. GISBORNE.

SIR CHAS. MIDDLETON, BART. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Admiralty, April 24, 1805.

My dear Friend,

I received an express from Mr. Pitt on Monday, acquainting me that he had the King's permission to offer me a peerage, and the place of first Lord of the Admiralty, which I have accepted. I have seen him since I came to town, and he will acquaint his Majesty to-morrow with my acceptance.

The task is a very arduous one, and under present circumstances, beyond conception, hazardous. I shall hope for the prayers of my friends, and do the best I

can in the post wherein God has through his providence placed me.

You say too true of poor Lord Melville. Remember me where you are, and believe me,

Very affectionately yours,

CHARLES MIDDLETON.

P.S. I don't leave town till Friday morning.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ.

Palace Yard*, Tuesday morning, 1805.

My dear Stephen,

My patience and temper are really tried in the business of this order in council, more almost than in any other part of this long course of abominations. First, I fear it will not be practicable to get more than this: — That as any increase which within the last year, or perhaps since the capture of the Guiana colonies, has taken place in the ships fitted out in this country for the Slave Trade, may be alleged to have been fitted out with a view to the supply of the Guiana colonies,— they shall be allowed to receive the amount of such surplus of the last year. This, then, should be put into such a form as will suit an order in council, and it should be done immediately, for I have this morning received the enclosed letter from Lord H. Petty. I am to see Pitt

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 231.

again to-morrow (I am just come from a few hasty moments with him), and in the meantime I promised to prepare and send him the above proposition. But I should like also to have a short statement of reasons for any other and better settlement. Pitt tells me the Attorney-General is the man who is to draw up and approve of the order, and to him, you and I could talk at the House of Commons between four and five, or some such time, this afternoon. I find the contract clause was inserted by the Chancellor; and, as Mr. P. assured me, he believed (as is highly probable), from a general principle, without having been at all instructed in this particular instance. How utterly detestable, that his legal habits should make him think he ought to sanction the fulfilment of such a contract as this. 'Tis really too bad. I am sick of this bad world, but let us press forward.

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO REV. THOMAS GISBORNE, SCARBOROUGH.

Broomfield, July 30, 1805.

My dear Gisborne,

Never surely was there so *abstemious* a correspondent, or one who so studiously guarded (Mr. Stephen nevertheless always excepted) against being drawn into loquacity, by the wretched scrap of paper to which he committed his scantlings. Of Mr. Boutflower I have

often heard, and always very favourably; but I never have been at Scarborough since I knew his character. I wish you to become acquainted with him, to put him on considering whether there is any way in which the cause of religion and morals may be promoted by my aid. Does he want books or tracts? Are they wanted at Scarborough? What is the general character of the clergy thereabouts? and, in short, be so good as to obtain all the information you can; and if any thing be worth communicating, *candidus imperti.* You see I am providing you matter, pitying the barrenness of the soil, and ascribing to that, more than to the indolence of the reaper, that he scarce sends a gleaning's worth to a distant friend, who is hungering after hearing from you....

I hope you are all well. I thank God we are; but this sadly crowded place will not let me pay off my arrear of letters, and fall to something more productive. You will retort, Why, then, worry me with an epistle of three sides in return for a short note? Well, that I may not strengthen that argument, I will hasten to a conclusion, and with kind remembrances to Mrs. G. and Mary, subscribe myself,

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MR. NORTON.*

Broomfield, August 13, 1805.

My dear Sir,

It is not without great pain that I find you are about to return to your own country, whither you will carry along with you the esteem and friendly attachment of myself, and I believe of all who have had the opportunity of becoming well acquainted with you. May that Providence which brought you to this country protect and guide you, and render you the favoured instrument of much good to your countrymen. It is this last consideration, indeed, which chiefly reconciles me to the idea of losing you; and I take this occasion of assuring you, that I shall be truly happy if any opportunities occur, of lending my little aid towards the production of the same end; and I beg you will always call on me to co-operate with you in this way, whenever you think I or my friends can be of any service.

It is probable that, circumstanced as you are at this moment, you may feel some reluctance about applying again to Government for any pecuniary supplies, and therefore my friends Mr. H. and Rt. Thornton, and Mr. Sharpe, to whom I know I may add Mr. Barclay, hope you will allow us to present you with the trifling testimony of our friendly regard, which I now enclose.

Farewell, my dear Sir; I trust you will not forget your English friends, as, believe me, they will not be

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 188.

unmindful of you. And you will especially be remembered in the prayers of him who is,

My dear Sir,

With cordial esteem and regard,

Very sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

MR. NORTON TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Falmouth, August 29, 1805.

My dear Sir,

Providence pleasing that we should not leave the British shores abruptly, (the wind being right ahead ever since we were abreast of Portland, which has obliged us to put in here, where some of our convoy were waiting for us,) friendship and gratitude urges me again to communicate to you, before I leave the island.

Since we passed Portland we have been continually tacking, and beating up against the wind. We saw and saluted the King in his pleasure yacht off Weymouth. When we passed Sidmouth I thought of our friend Lord Teignmouth, and wished I had been able to have stept on shore, and have taken farewell of him. It is pleasing to see how God with your navy protects your shores, no enemy dares approach while their coasts are encompassed with your ships; it calls to my recollection our situation with the Americans, before the peace of

1795; that while we hunted on their frontiers, they could not, with safety, leave their fortifications.

Although I cannot say I return home with pleasure while anything like an invasion is expected, yet I really have that confidence in your navy, that if it should be attempted, I think, with God's aid, it will not leave many laurels to be reaped by those on land; and that the proud invaders will hardly reach your shores except for their further humiliation; — what gives me most apprehension is the subtlety of your adversary, who by procrastination may blunt your vigilance at the same time that he is increasing his means and inuring his people to run away at sea, and to those who are not accustomed to conquer, the escaping is gaining a half victory.

I feel extremely indebted to Lord Barham for the kind favour he has granted me of a passage in this frigate, in which I certainly see a very pleasing specimen of the British navy. Discipline regular and strict, at the same time preserved with the greatest mildness and moderation — it resembles more what is practised among our tribes, than from description I had reason to imagine. Commands are given with an energy concordant with circumstances, that generally ensures a ready obedience. (I must, however, observe, that our warriors, in common, are generally treated with that deference shown midshipmen); but the regular system of discipline is a sufficient remedy for any inconvenience that might arise in your service from the variety of characters of the lower ranks that are necessarily admitted therein; the blustering language and impre-

cations, which I have heard in merchant vessels, have never here assailed my ears; all this profane and useless appendage to commands seems here wisely to be laid aside.

I am indebted to Captain Pelly for every degree of attention to render my situation as comfortable as possible; fortunately I have not been at all sea-sick this time; and as we were eight days at sea, I think I am now seasoned. The printing press, which the watermen said was too large for their wherries to take, the captain was so good as to send his boat for; so that all is on board.

Please present my sincere respects to Mrs. Wilberforce; remember me to all our Clapham friends; for though I cannot at the same time write to all, yet certainly my heart warms to all your worthy acquaintance, the remembrance of whose friendship will ever convey pleasure, as their society did instruction, to my mind.

Your faithful friend and humble servant,

JOHN NORTON.

Teyoninhokarawen.

HENRY BROUGHAM, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

George Street, Edinburgh, Sept. 5, 1805.

My dear Sir,

I heartily congratulate you on the victory which you have at last obtained by the publication of the order in council. On my arrival here I received the letter which you were good enough to send me; and can assure you what you said about the copy of the order, previous to its publication, was altogether unnecessary, as I had understood the thing completely the moment you mentioned it in conversation. I told you, I believe, that I had lost no time in renewing my correspondence with my Dutch friends. Since the publication I have taken further steps, but I find the communication is far from regular; for I have received a letter, referring to some abolition translations, which it seems had been sent over to me, and which I never heard of. I am in expectation of further advices which may chance to come safe, and shall lose no time in communicating all I can learn. I have taken care that a copy of the Gazette shall be sent over. I regret exceedingly that so little notice has been taken of the measure at home. Do not you conceive that a more extensive diffusion of the knowledge of it, would tend greatly to the encouragement of our friends throughout the country? One scarcely thought it could have escaped Cobbett. I expected an attack upon it in that quarter as inevitable; and since the journals favourable to the cause are silent, I know not whether the notoriety which would have

resulted from his Philippic, might not have been more beneficial than total neglect. Of Mr. Clarkson I have seen nothing here. Some persons, to whom he and the objects of his tour are known, expected his arrival several weeks ago — but have heard nothing since. Upon making inquiry among medical teachers and others connected with that profession, I find one answer pretty generally given, when you ask about the residence of surgeons who had been fitted out for the African trade. "None of them ever come back." I believe very few do, and *they* are scattered up and down the country.

Things look much more warlike upon the continent. But if the coalescing powers understand one another sufficiently to assume a commanding attitude, might not some fair, open, and honourable proposition be made for regulating the affairs of Europe, and settling a guarantee of its future safety, before the chance of another, perhaps a last, continental, war is entrusted with the future fates of the world? I can't help wishing that some such experiment were made — whether it terminated in fighting or treating. I beg my best respects to Mrs. W., and remain with great respect and esteem,

Yours faithfully,

H. Brougham, Jun.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Near London, October 2, 1805.

My dear Friend,

Our friend Lord Barham is doing as well as possible in the main, and instead of there being any want of vigour he is really the member of the Administration in whom that quality, tempered with judgment, and guarded by foresight, may be found in the most abundant measure. But I fear he a little too much worries Mr. Pitt, who must have been more than human not to have suffered a little (truly he has suffered less than almost any other person would have done in his circumstances) from the servility and suppleness which have been observed toward him, even by those from whom better things might have been expected, considering their birth and connections. But there are great vulgar as well as little vulgar; and it is not superiority of understanding either, which exempts from the influence of this baseness of spirit.

I was not forgetful of what you said about the ——— family; but I fear we have all been too sanguine in our hopes in that quarter. O how forcibly is the passage impressed on us, "How hardly shall they that have riches," &c. Alas! the religion of these people is too apt to be a dress which is put off or on, and is more or less exposed to view according to the company they are in. With you, or even with me, they are religious; but with others, their religion is of a very accommodating quality. I called a few days ago on ———,

but I could not turn the conversation to any thing really useful. How often am I reminded of a simple Yorkshire man, a youth of great natural shrewdness and strong sense, under a gawky exterior, who, exciting in me some surprise, by telling me that at Cambridge, where I knew he had done good, he used to proceed cautiously, and especially begin warily, instead of rushing at once into the midst of things: — I went on to inquire what had been these distant gradual approaches." "Why," says he, "I generally began, Sir, by telling them of the new birth, and asking them if they could think they had experienced it." Alas! in a dozen visits I fear I should scarcely get so far, though, by the way, it is no more than your due to say, that I have often respected the courage with which you, on occasions of this sort, have often advanced to the storm, instead of stopping at the first and second parallels.

We have been much alarmed about our little baby, and these infanticles soon begin to twine their little cords round our hearts. My time has been sadly engrossed with a variety of domestic cares. In short, I remember Lord Bacon, and — who was the other? was it not Sir Thomas More? who used to speak of the demand of domestic assiduities.

I have still a budget full of matter for you, durst I but untie the thongs; but I must resist the impulse.

What a critical state of public affairs! and what a comfort to reflect that a higher power directs all the secret springs, and, whatever may be the fate of empires, will cause all to work together for good to them that love him.

O my friend, I sometimes think that were I without religion I should almost be tempted to take the shortest course out of life, in order to see beyond the narrow limits which have circumscribed our view, just as one would cut open a child's toy to inspect the interior machinery. Well — the day will come, and I humbly trust we shall there meet (Oh, what a blessed idea!) all who love God and one another, freed from pain, and sickness, and sorrow, and all our little infirmities and drawbacks, and shall part no more for ever. Do you remember this sublimely pictured out in M'Laurin, in his essay on the Communion of the Saints? His vile creeping style is quite elevated into sublimity by the grandeur of the ideas. Kind remembrances.

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

HENRY BROUGHAM, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

George Street, Edinburgh, October 4, 1805.

My dear Sir,

I have received a communication from Holland, with a degree of caution and indirectness sufficiently demonstrative of the narrow inspection exercised over men's actions at the present moment. It contains an assurance, that the abolition interest remains zealous and powerful, and that Shimmelpenninck is actuated by

the most liberal views; but jealous of being thought biassed by any English partialities. It also states that the Dutch commissary Mist, who has been for some time examining the Cape settlements, gives a flat contradiction to almost all Barrow's information; accusing that traveller of interested views, and asserting that he can show how he was often misled. He is to publish his statement. In the mean time this information is official; the Cape coming immediately under the President's department.

From my friend Mr. Stuart (secretary of embassy at St. Petersburgh) I have received a most satisfactory account of the Russian peasantry, which I shall communicate at meeting; together with a statement regarding the peasants in Polish Prussia, from the celebrated historian, Müller, at Berlin.

I rejoiced to see that you had so happily acquired an increase of family, and trust Mrs. W. is now quite restored to health.

I have delayed writing this, in consequence of a meeting I had lately with a very intelligent gentleman, who has been employed for many years on the Statistics of Ireland, and is now very anxious upon the subject of the education of the lower orders in that country. I had collected a great many notices from his information, which is very extensive, and drawn from long residence in the island; but find it will exceed the bounds of a letter to communicate these, so that after delaying my letter for the purpose, I have left myself only room and time to make the apology.

When you favour me with an answer, will you tell me

when you think parliament is likely to meet, and whether there is really to be a dissolution?

Believe me ever, with great esteem,

Yours most faithfully,

HENRY BROUGHAM, JUN.

DEAN OF CARLISLE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Queen's College, October 24, 1805.

My dear Friend,

I have known two Dissenters of Queen's; one was one of the Eggintons of Hull, and the other one Sidney Hollis Foy, a youth recommended here by Jebb, and who came under the auspices, I think, of that Brent Hollis Smith, or some such name (a red hot republican twenty-five years ago), who nevertheless was fined, and perhaps confined about some Wilkite or bribery affair in elections. I am not clear, yet the thing was notorious, and you may remember it. I had a pupil also who now occurs to me, a very decent man, Rogers; his father was a banker near London, or in London, about twenty-five years ago.

I never heard of the smallest inconvenience and difficulty they were put to, nor of any rudeness they met with. Indeed, the things were hardly known. Again, Harrison, our fellow, came as a Quaker, and from a Quaker's family; but then all these conformed, and Dissenters must conform in going to chapel, and also in going to Sacrament.

In regard to going to Sacrament, I remember that

Egginton's parents desired he might be excused: the matter was examined into, and my predecessor very properly returned for answer that no dispensation could be given, as it certainly cannot consistently with our institutions. However, if nothing is said about it, the non-attendance would probably be connived at a good deal.

A Dissenter cannot properly be matriculated, and so become a member of the University, for I think he now declares, at matriculation, that he is *bonâ fide* a member of the Church of England.

After all, I am not fond of having to do with persons of this class.

I am yours affectionately,

I. MILNER.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO HENRY BANKES, ESQ.

Broomfield, October 25, 1805.

My dear Bankes,

You and I* (Mr. Hatsell) have been so long in the habit of comparing notes with each other on political subjects, and, in general, to my great satisfaction our views and opinions have been so much the same, that I always feel disposed to communicate to you any intelligence I hear which is worth your receiving. I can scarcely be said now to have any thing to state

* A proverbial allusion with Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Bankes to a mode of expressing himself employed by Mr. Hatsell, vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 213.

answerable to the expectations you might form from the above beginning; but having seen Pitt on Wednesday, I meant to give you a general notion of the effect produced on me by our conversation, and you would probably have had a much longer letter, had I been able to take up my pen yesterday as I intended. But exposure to a bitter east wind brought on one of my feverish attacks, and I was the whole of yesterday confined to my bed; to-day, I thank God, I am much better, but only just dressed (half-past two o'clock), and not in very good writing trim. I shall therefore be a shorter, if I am also a duller correspondent than I should have been twenty-four hours ago. But 1st, you will like to know for certain what I find is only just now certainly determined (indeed, scarcely certainly according to Pitt's language), that parliament is not to meet till the second week in January.

2. The newspapers will have excited in your mind the same fears they have called forth in mine, that Buonaparte has been too rapid for the Austrians. I understand Government say that the Austrians did not expect Buonaparte would violate the Prussian territory, or that they would be so soon in their immediate neighbourhood. I own I have no patience with them. Did they not know that celerity was Buonaparte's chief excellence? Did they not believe he would not be very scrupulous in violating any territory for a great object? Pitt seems confident that the force of the confederates, taken together, is considerably greater than what Buonaparte has to oppose to them. But I cannot help fearing from the accounts the papers give us, that the French

have penetrated so far as to get between the Russians who were coming forward and the Austrians. If so, there may be sad work, and surely we must say the result of unpardonable negligence; for any man of common sense, knowing that 80 or 100,000 Russians were coming on to his aid, would have made the junction of his force with them as clear as possible. In the present state of things, one is led even more than ever before to the conclusion, that if Prussia would join, the result would probably be favourable. In this case, the French might pay dearly for having advanced so far. And Pitt is using the utmost endeavours to induce the King of Prussia to join the confederacy. Lord Harrowby is going over to Berlin for this purpose. He is much respected among the foreign ministers, as I know from good authority, and I believe a fitter man could not be found for the mission.

I find ideas have been started, which have been floating in my own mind, that any arrangement by which Prussia should be put in possession of Holland, with a sufficient barrier to defend it against France, would tend much, as matters now stand, to the security of this country, though somehow I feel a repugnance to our being parties to any of those arrangements which have at all the air of partitioning the territories of weaker states among stronger. Yet the independence of Holland, or, if that cannot be accomplished, the bringing Holland from the possession of France, is really a British object; a point of extreme importance to us. I cannot help fearing, that if the French should have got between the Austrians and Russians, the great autocrat of all the Russias will

think himself ill-treated, and this may produce a quarrel between the allies. Our government seem to have made great efforts, and with considerable success so far as preparations go. P. says we have a disposable army of 60,000 men. I thought he seemed less sanguine than he used to be, and was glad to think him so. I never compared notes with you on one point on which I thought he was a little tender. I mean, there being no offer of negotiating and making peace on certain stated terms, before the actually engaging in a joint war in alliance with the continental powers. This is conceived to be sufficiently explained (and I am not sure it may not be so, by the letter which recalled Novoziltzoff on Buonaparte's making himself king of Italy). It might be necessary to the preservation of our cordiality with Russia, to acquiesce in their determinations; and any hesitation to take up the matter in as high a tone as their own might have been dangerous. I more and more see reason to admire the wisdom of Chancellor Oxenstiern's famous apophthegm *: — *Mi fili nescis quam parvâ sapientia regitur mundus.* The Austrians' beginning of the war very much resembles some of the great Mack's former achievements. I must break off — indeed I have given you enough for a short letter. Let me, however, thank you for some very good game, which was very acceptable, and inquire after your young people and Mrs. Bankes.

Believe me, my dear B.,
ever affectionately yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

* This speech is attributed to Sixtus Quintus by Sir Walter Raleigh. Hist. of the World, 1. 2. 21. § 6.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE RT. HON. WM. PITT.

[Private.]

Broomfield, Oct. 25, 1805.

My dear Pitt,

I was taking up my pen to say to you something which I thought of just after we parted on Wednesday, when another idea occurred to me, which I will mention first, lest you should think me like some others I have heard you mention, who pop out at last, or in a post-script, the real object of the visit or letter. It is, that if in the course of any of your calls for proper men to be employed in any diplomatic business you should be at a loss for one, you perhaps could not in the whole kingdom find any one in all respects so well qualified as the Mr. Brougham whom I formerly mentioned to you. He speaks French as well as English, and several other languages. But the great thing is, that he is a man of uncommon talents and address, and for his age, twenty-six, knowledge also, and I told you of his being so long the advocate for your government in Edinburgh.

My mentioning him to you is entirely of my own head; of course he knows nothing of it, indeed, he is in Edinburgh, and I only do it (most solemnly I assure you) on public grounds, and because I know you must often want men for foreign services. He has, besides the qualities I mentioned, great resolution, strength of constitution, &c. The idea of mentioning him to you arose in my mind when I was going to inform you, that in the course of his tour on the Continent last year, particularly

at Vienna, Naples, &c., he found that all the foreign ministers to whom, especially at Vienna, he had good introductions, spoke of Lord Harrowby in the highest terms; in short, it was when I was speaking of Harrowby in the terms you know I should use, he declared, that it was surprising how little justice appeared to be done to him at home, or even by some of our own diplomatic and other English people abroad, compared with the estimation in which he was held among all foreigners of rank and consequence. He said much more of the same kind. I thought you would like to hear this; it made me the more rejoice at his undertaking the mission* on which he is now embarking.

I am ever, my dear Pitt,
Yours most truly,
W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I need not say this requires no answer.

LORD CASTLEREAGH TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Wilderness, Nov. 17, 1805.

My dear Sir,

The pressure of other business has prevented me hitherto from digesting any thing in detail on the subject of your letter. It shall not however stagnate, and

* To Berlin, vide sup. p. 49.

I shall be very happy to avail myself of your assistance in framing the instructions as well as in selecting some proper instruments to carry the plan into effect.* The short despatch from Collingwood of the 28th is highly satisfactory as to the proportion in which the loss† has fallen on the French; only three out of the eighteen appear to have escaped.

I am, dear Sir,
With great regard,
Yours most faithfully, &c.
CASTLEREAGH.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ.

Yoxall Lodge, Lichfield, December 1, 1805.

My dear Stephen,

I meant to write to you to-day, but visiting, company, &c., have frittered away all my day. Time flies whether in a villa or a lodge; within five miles of London or in a forest 180 miles from that seat of smoke and turmoil. I now only write to say that having been writing to Henry Thornton, and seeing his bank named to receive subscriptions for the distressed people in Germany, I have desired him to put me down for ten or twenty pounds as he judges best. If he neglects, as may happen from the multitude of his matters, be so good

* For education in New South Wales.
† After the battle of Trafalgar.

as to do the business, and if you judge twenty proper, I beg you to name that sum. Yet I am clear it should not be left to individuals, but be taken up by parliament. Application should be made by government.

It is a delicate matter. I should fear if, we sent provisions, the armies would eat them. If money, it would only raise the price of provisions. Do attend to this, lest their not understanding the subject should lead to mischief instead of good. Farewell.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. My mind has all this time been full of Buonaparte at Vienna.

" Be sure your sin will find you out," &c.

LORD REDESDALE, CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND, TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

December 18, 1805.

My dear Sir,

Your letter of the 12th, dated from the Temple, near Leicester, has found me in my country retirement; but retired, not because I ought to have leisure for retirement, but because the gout, in its consequences, has disabled me from doing business. The pain of the disorder has left me; but it has produced a languor which deprives me of rest. For near a month, first

from pain, and then from its consequences, I have seldom enjoyed an hour's sleep in any one night. Air, and exercise, and medicine, have been all hitherto tried in vain. I hope, however, by degrees, to recover my strength and ordinary rest, when my mind shall be wholly relieved from the anxiety of business.

It gave me much pleasure to find that the remembrance of an old friend was so acceptable to you. I often think of my friends in England, and regret the spot where, alone, "English minds and manners may be found." You are in a considerable degree right in the judgment you have formed of this country, and of the mistakes of English ministers with relation to it. It is true that the diseases under which Ireland labours are principally moral and social; and that, now that its parliament is gone, its political diseases are comparatively small. But the diseases under which it has so long laboured, have so contaminated the minds of the people, that it will require much time, and much care, to restore them to a sound moral and social state.

Our friend Lord Wellesley lately sent me Major Wilks's report of the interior administration, &c. of the government of Mysore, and I was much struck with some passages, as demonstrative that the same causes will almost universally produce the same effects on the minds of men. In p. 26., speaking of the manner in which causes are decided in Mysore, Major Wilks observes that it is a fixed rule of evidence to suspect, as false, the testimony of every witness, until its truth is otherwise supported. A barrister, in high practice at the Irish bar, gave me, almost in words, the same

caution soon after my arrival here, and it has been confirmed to me since by many. Major Wilks states conversations with the Dewanny of Mysore, and other intelligent persons, in which they avowed, as an abstract proposition, founded on experience, that the presumption is infinitely stronger against the veracity, than in favour of the truth of a witness; and the Major concludes by attributing the defective morals of the people of Mysore to the habitual necessity of opposing fraud to force, under the despotic governments which had oppressed them, and that a better order of things would probably reduce the evil. He also supposes the religious system of the country may, in this point, be particularly defective, and may not produce that influence over the morals of the people, which has been considered as the best security for the probity of men. It seems to me that, in both these points, there is a strong resemblance between Mysore and Ireland; and that the removal of an openly corrupt parliament, a due administration, a strong civil government, affording full protection to the weak against the strong, assisted by a better sense of religious duty, will correct the defective morals of the people of Ireland. Above all, I believe that the extension of the representation throughout the country would operate strongly and decisively. The Roman Catholic priest in Ireland never teaches to his flocks the just obligation of moral duties. Superstitious observances tend much more to his profit, and to the maintenance of his authority. He severely punishes a slight breach of those observances: he readily grants absolution, even for murder, on a very slight penance.

The bad morals of the Roman Catholics corrupt the morals of the Protestants. They are induced to oppose falsehood to falsehood, fraud to fraud, force to force. There are still large districts in Ireland in which it may be said, the King's writ does "not run;" that is, it is obeyed or disobeyed at the will and pleasure of the most powerful. The establishment of schools is rapidly increasing in Ireland, and the diffusion of something like knowledge must do good. The Archbishop of Cashel observed to me the other day, that men who were taught to read, and by degrees got books into their hands, would soon cease to be the dupes of such an abject superstition, as led them to eat the ashes of a dead priest as a preservative against evil. Much is doing and may be done in this way; and if ministers will but give attention to those who see Ireland in Ireland, twenty years may produce a great change. I have written a long, and I fear a tedious, letter; and Lady R. reminds me I have written too much. She begs to join in respects to Mrs. Wilberforce as well as yourself, with, my dear Sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

REDESDALE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Broomfield, January 15, 1806.

Indeed, my dear friend, I must plead not guilty. What, you will say, before you are arraigned? Your very precipitation proves your criminality. But again I say, not guilty of the heavy charge of neglecting an absent friend, though I own appearances are against me. Could my noble spirit indeed have been satisfied with sending back, in return for your kind and interesting letter, a few short words, of pretty well and so forth, I might have written any day; but I wished to treat you better than that, and the consequence has been, what the boy and the filberts long ago preached to us.

First, to give you a little of our history. We sallied forth about the beginning of November, and the whole house of Wilberforce took up their abode with the S.'s for one fortnight, and afterwards with G. for another. In reviewing the old haunts of my bachelor days with such a troop at my heels, how often was I led to adopt the good old patriarch's exclamation, "With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands." It is a gratifying circumstance to find our friends advancing in the most important matters; in those indeed which are alone of any real importance. There was always in our friend that godly sincerity, which is a sure prognostic of future proficiency, and it is truly delightful to see his humility, his spirituality and indifference to this world's great things, his love of all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and all this without any impeachment of

his cheerfulness or companionableness — a most *cacophonous* denomination Dr. Parr would say; but, good Doctor, find me a better, of course I mean in English, for you would, I doubt not, either find or make me a more smoothly going epithet in Greek.

But to return to ——— with you; a fortnight soon rolled away and transferred us to the Temple, where our kind friends the Babingtons received us with their accustomed cordiality; there, also, I had not been for many years before. By the way, to return your story of the good deeds of bishops with another: a Mr. Vaughan of Leicester, the Doctor's brother, wrote to the Inspecting Officer of the district, who had appointed either Sunday or the Thanksgiving day, I forget which, for an inspection of the Leicester Volunteers, to beg him to change the day; the officer returning no answer, Vaughan wrote to the Bishop of Lincoln, his diocesan, sending a copy of his letter, and explaining the case. On this the Bishop himself wrote a very proper letter to the Duke of York, deprecating the appointing inspections, &c., on Sundays, &c. The Duke, in his answer, observed that Parliament seemed rather to have intimated to the military, that such things should be on the Sunday. To be sure, the true place for the bishops to have made their objections was the House of Lords, where, however, not a tongue was wagged against the detestable provision; and Pitt, alas! was the chief author of the mischief. London and Durham, to do them justice, were at a distance; and Canterbury superannuated, as I found when I went to lay the matter before him; for I really took great pains, and shrunk from no part of the combat, a

circumstance on which I now reflect with pleasure; for the evil which is resulting from the drillings, inspectings, &c. on the Sunday, exceeds all calculation: — but to resume my story. The Bishop, after all, sent back to Vaughan his own letter, and the Duke of York's answer, with a civil note.—Poor Durham! what a commentary on the hollowness of all human grandeur and splendour, &c. Poor Pitt, too! I have been too poorly ever since he returned to get to see him, which I shall do as shortly as possible, but I fear he is very much shattered. I wonder his mind stands it; he must be ready to say, "This world was made for Cæsar."

I must break off, though I could keep writing till I had filled a quire; but time fails. I must stop, though with difficulty. You must not expect to hear from me soon again, as I have many letters, and am deep in arrears to various lines of business. Farewell. Mrs. W. desires to send her love to you and all the sisterhood.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

LORD WELLESLEY TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Park Lane, January 24, 1806.

My dear Wilberforce,

I have been so distressed for some days by the dreadful calamity which has fallen upon us, that I have

not had spirits sufficient to enable me either to call upon you, or to write to you. But I am sincerely and warmly sensible of your great kindness, and of the particular cordiality of your very friendly and affectionate note, to which, perhaps, I could scarcely plead a claim, after so long an apparent neglect of the kind letters which I received from you in India. I trusted, however, much to your candour and justice, expecting that you would make great allowance for the extreme labour of my public situation, which for the last three years scarcely left me time even to write to my family, and obliged me to renounce all private correspondence.

I am extremely anxious to have the pleasure of seeing you, and of renewing our old friendship, which I assure you, I have retained in full force. When we meet, we shall have many melancholy events to deplore, and many dear friends to regret. But we must endeavour to discharge our duty towards our country with fortitude and perseverance, and to remedy what we could not prevent. I know nothing of public arrangements, and all the reports in the newspapers respecting myself are utterly groundless. To you I think it my duty to declare, that the memory of my ever-to-be-lamented friend, will always be the primary object of my veneration and attachment in public life, but that I will never lend my hand to sustain any system of administration, evidently inadequate to the difficulties and dangers of the crisis. I shall be most happy to labour in any way which may promise advantage to the public service; but having no personal objects of pursuit, I shall not easily be deluded from the solemn conviction of my mind, that our recent loss

cannot be repaired, nor our imminent perils be averted, otherwise than by an union of the approved talents and highest characters of the nation.

I hope you will appoint an hour for meeting me, either at your own house or here, when I shall be most happy to obey your commands, and to satisfy you that I remain, my dear Wilberforce,

Ever yours most affectionately and sincerely,

WELLESLEY.

RALPH CREYKE, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bath, January 25, 1806.

My dear Sir,

I thank you much for your attention. The alarming rumours of Mr. Pitt's illness made me very anxious to ascertain the truth, and therefore I took the liberty of breaking in upon your time, and requesting that you would answer my inquiry. Your letter checked all my expectation, and the eagerness of my hope; for I had seen him, for the first week after our arrival, walk every morning upon the South Parade, with what appeared to us a firm step. We all of us stole a peep at him from our window with admiration; and a principal article of intelligence to our friends in Yorkshire was, that we had seen Mr. Pitt. This was before the disastrous accounts came from the Continent. I knew that

he had saved England, and fancied that I saw the saviour of Europe (and so he would have been, if success were always attendant upon good plans and great exertions). He then appeared, in my eyes, the most elevated of human beings. What a sudden and an awful change! it is really a noonday eclipse. But when will that former light be relumined? I am not often in despair; but at present, I fear that the King will not know where to look for that Promethean heat — where to find a mind so pure in principle and in practice, endowed with such firmness, and capable of such active exertion. When we lose those whom we value and esteem, our memory dwells with pleasure upon every, even melancholy, circumstance that accompanies the close of their life; and I read with comfort the account given in all the papers, of Mr. Pitt's affectionate parting from his family, of his religious intercourse with the Bishop of Lincoln, and his patient resignation to the Divine Will. I shall ever revere his memory for standing between the dead and the living, and staying the plague which, in the French Revolution, had infected the Continent, and might have spread and desolated this island. But I shall finish, for I have really been bewildered, and dreaming troublous dreams ever since this frightful event was announced.

I sincerely hope that you and Mrs. Wilberforce are in better health. The more quiet you can enjoy, the better; but I fear the neighbourhood of London cannot allow any great portion of that blessing to you in these bustling moments. Bath would be your best retreat; especially if parliament is to be dissolved, as many

believe likely, if the Grenville party come in. Your constituents would excuse your absence from the county, and your friends would manage the ceremony for you: of all this, however, you are the best judge. Perhaps I speak as I wish. Adieu. May health and happiness ever attend you!

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours most faithfully,

RALPH CREYKE.

DEAN OF CARLISLE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Queen's College, Cambridge, February 6, 1806.
Thursday morning.

My dear Sir,

The election * is fixed for to-morrow in the forenoon; and such a number of old acquaintance keep dropping in upon me, that I think it best to take up my pen and answer yours of this morning immediately upon the receipt of it.

Independently of your several letters to me, the warmth with which we hear from all quarters that you espouse the cause of Lord H. Petty, creates considerable difficulties in the minds of several of us, who have been accustomed to look up to you with entire confidence, both as an upright and a wise pilot in the most

* Of a member for Cambridge in the room of Mr. Pitt.

tempestuous seasons. The effect of this present active warmth of yours has, to my certain knowledge, secured to his Lordship some voters, who are far from being easy now on account of the promises they have given. In regard to myself, you have also effectually stopped all my activity in opposition to Lord H. Petty. I have not influenced, much less brought up from the country, a single vote against him, though from my long residence and number of pupils public and private, you must be sure I have had a number of applications to know my wishes on this occasion.

But why not vote for him myself? In one word, because I fear he is likely to be hostile to some of those great constitutional principles which brought about the revolution in this country; and which, in my judgment, cannot be departed from without endangering the whole fabric of British liberty in church and state.

I must say, however, that Lord H. Petty conversed with me very fairly and candidly on the subject of the Catholic emancipation; and I like him much better for openly avowing the bias of his mind to be towards acceding to the emancipation, than if he had shuffled and evaded the question, as many canvassers in his situation would have done. But still I cannot bring myself either directly or indirectly to be aiding and abetting what I think so replete with danger. And, therefore, as I know you too well to suppose you would wish me to act in any respect contrary to my deliberate judgment, I have only to lament (as I do most poignantly) what a few weeks ago I should have pronounced almost impossible, viz. that a case should happen in po-

litics where you and I should differ materially in practice.

But remember, it is quite as repugnant to the principles which I have long avowed to vote for an enemy of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, as it is, that I should throw a single grain into the scale of those who favour either the repeal of the Test Act, or of the emancipation of the Catholics; and as Lord Palmerston has not been quite so explicit on the head of the Abolition as I could wish, or as perhaps he or his friends may be in the course of this day, I remain even yet in doubt (near as the election is) whether I can conscientiously vote for him. He has, I understand, spoken decidedly as to the Test Act and the emancipation business; and if I could, to my satisfaction, make out that he also will be for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, I might, in my present state of mind, bring myself to give him my individual vote; but even that will cost me a severe pang, when I reflect that, in so doing, I go directly contrary to your earnest wishes and application.

On this point, of voting or not voting, I, at this moment, really do not feel competent to decide; but be assured, that no other application, or any thing else on earth but the merits of the question, as they appear to my judgment, will determine me after I have got all the information I can: and, moreover, whatever I do, I shall take most particular care to remain unpledged for the general election, which may happen very soon.

I do not think the real principles of the Roman Catholics are, in general, understood by persons of rank

and distinction; and so I took the liberty of saying to Lord H. Petty. This is the first time I was ever not quite on your side, and I think you will forgive me,

As I am, dear Sir, yours most truly,

ISAAC MILNER.

DEAN OF CARLISLE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Queen's College, Cambridge, February 7, 1806.
Friday evening.

My dear Friend,

You will hate to see my letters; I am the messenger of such a number of disagreeable things. After all, I know not whether you will rejoice in the prevalence of whatever it is that brings in Lord H. Petty. Prevalent it is to a prodigious degree. I know not, indeed, whether the poll be actually closed; but, from appearances about two hours ago, I was told that he had more votes than the other two put together.

Last night, when I had expected to have spent a comfortable evening at my own house with La Trobe, and Dr. Jowett, and a young man ortwo, (all being engaged at eight o'clock to come and play the organ, sing, &c.) I was obliged to leave them all to attend to visiters and electioneerers. There came in,

1. Harrison of our college, and two more, whom you don't know, all Lord H. Petty's and all Foxites.

2. Then came the two Westerns, both of this college. One is a member of the House of Commons, always a Foxite.

3. Robert Grant came in, and was precisely in my own situation, that is, determined against Lord H. Petty, but not convinced that Lord Palmerston would be sound as to the Slave Trade. But he had been talking a deal with him and his friends, and the result was, that he thought him quite sincere, and sufficiently decided to act upon.

4. By and by, in came Lord Palmerston: we conversed a full hour on the subject of the Slave Trade, and I can assure you, a more ingenuous appearance I never saw. The young man's conscience seemed hard at work for fear, not of saying too little, but of saying too much, viz. of saying more than he could justify to his mind, from the little consideration which he had given to the subject. He is but a lad; — but I could not discover the most latent hostility, or ground for suspecting hostility, and he must be a deceiver, indeed, of a very deep cast, if he deceives at all in this instance. In a word, all things considered and weighed over and over, and not brought to a crisis till between nine and ten this morning, I declared for him. About an hour after this, came Christian, who said he had just met Lord Clive, who had told him that my declaration had got Lord Palmerston thirty-four votes already. *That*, no doubt, is sadly overstated; and be it as it may, we are all in a woful minority. But as minorities usually support themselves, and keep themselves in heart by dwelling on their virtuous and disinterested motives, and by get-

ting a little together, and talking against the motives of the majorities, so do we.

5. I fervently wish you may find Lord H. P., and Fox, &c., as true friends to the Abolition as you have reason to suppose them. Their having been so long pledged (at least Fox) may do something; inclination may also do something; but where there is a want of sound and substantial principle, men will act right no longer than they conceive it suits their interests on the whole. You will have Socinians every where in the Church, if not Deists; and in the State you will have the same, with an inundation of low profligate morals. Things were bad enough before, but the bowl will, I think, roll faster down the hill.

6. You will have judged before this, whether my letter to you of yesterday ought to be sent to Lord H. Petty, or not — with a view to do you any good in his mind. As to myself, I care not a halfpenny; but it may be of great use to the cause of the Abolition to keep well with him; and I should hope that the things I said about you in that letter would be conducive to that purpose really; for, in fact, you have been very useful to him, and he must know it, cannot but know it: if I had been the only person concerned, he might have suspected some sort of collusion, perhaps.

7. Smith, the fellow-commoner, is astonished to find they are drinking Fox every day in Trinity College Combination Room, and a fortnight ago they were drinking Pitt.

Yours ever,

ISAAC MILNER.

P. S. Did you ever write to Sir Robert Peel to get me the books * at Francfort? they are directed in a parcel, either for me, or what is more probable, for Arthur Young, Esq. They are at Messrs. *les freres Belli, Negocians à Francfort*, sent to them by Colonel G. de Trappe.

I hope you have not forgotten.

Lord Harrowby is come home. Is there any chance of my books being come from Berlin? I want them sadly; not that I have been able to get a line forward in my work this winter, owing to one or another vile disturbance.

Did I tell you, they say Lord H. Petty must have gained you by praying extempore?

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO REV. THOMAS GISBORNE.

Broomfield, February 11, 1806.

My dear Gisborne,

Had I foreseen that my not writing to you immediately on my receipt of your slip of paper would lead to so long a silence as has actually followed, I would have broken through every impediment, and have sent you at least a few lines; and as it often happens, waiting

* "The author has availed himself of the curious and instructive contents of three quarto volumes of the private letters of Luther; two of which he in vain sought after for several years, both in these dominions and on the Continent."—*Preface to Milner's Church History*, vol. v.

has had the effect of giving me more to say, while I have no more time to say it in. O what a lesson does Pitt's latter end read to us, of the importance of attending to religion in the days of health and vigour, and even of the benefits which may follow from being acquainted with the language of Scripture, and with the principles of Christianity! Poor fellow! for some time, perhaps a fortnight or more before his death, he sat chiefly (till the last few days, when he was almost entirely in bed) in his chair, neither reading, nor talking, nor hearing conversation. Conversation in a few moments fatigued him, and he saw but few people from the time of his coming from Bath, about eighteen days or twelve (on the sudden, I forget which) before his decease, and none at all but the Bishop, the physicians, and his servants, and one or two of the young Stanhopes, for the last week. It was not till the morning before his death that the Bishop of Lincoln could get leave to speak to him as to a dying man, and I have no reason to believe he thought himself in any immediate danger before. The Bishop proposed to pray with him, and in the strictest confidence, I will tell you what I am bound by promise not to mention generally. Pitt at first, poor fellow, objected — that he was not worthy to offer up any prayer (I think it was added) in his present state, referring, I suppose, to his bodily and mental weakness. The Bishop very properly told him that he, Pitt, knew the Bishop would not deceive him, and assured him that was the very state of mind in which prayer was best and most properly offered. The Bishop then prayed with him, and afterwards Pitt desired to settle his temporal

concerns, showing very much his character, such as I conceived it, by one or two traits which I will mention some other time. I am extremely pressed to-day. I am not aware, but have reason to fear the contrary, no farther religious intercourse took place before or after, and I own I thought what was inserted in the papers impossible to be true. Pitt was a man who always said less than he thought on such topics. The Bishop I ought to mention told me, he had often wished to speak to him before on these subjects, but the physicians said, "No, it might be fatal to him," &c. O my dear friend, what a scene does the dying chamber of this great man exhibit! Just before, we received the account of the death of Mrs. Buchanan, who was perfectly aware of her situation, and appeared to have almost a foretaste of the joy of heaven, and a countenance expressive of her heavenly hope, Christian love, and confidence. But what has struck me most is, that perhaps poor Pitt may be truly said to have died of a broken heart — he, who was prime minister of England, &c. Lord C. died, I fear, without the smallest thought of God, &c. How awful! yet to the very last he indicated that astonishing zeal in his country's service which his whole life had displayed.

Now one word on a very important topic. Have you been struck by the circumstance of the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, Lord Ellenborough, being for the first time made a politician? It seems a matter of immense importance; considered in all its relations, which I need not specify to you, who are well acquainted with them all. I feel so strongly the evils that it may

produce, that I have been considering whether if no one else did, I ought not to bring it before parliament. Can a guardian, *ex officio*, of the constitution, be warranted in suffering such an injury as this to be sustained, without trying to prevent it or giving the alarm? Personally, except that I cannot help fearing him for the Abolition, I should be glad to have Lord Ellenborough in the cabinet, and this brings me lastly to the Abolition.

From various circumstances it has happened that our great cause has been considerably accredited by what has passed at the last election for Cambridge. Lord H. Petty got a great deal of support, owing to his known zeal in the cause. His opponent, Lord Palmerston, lost much, owing to his being supposed, mistakenly I believe, to be our enemy; and numbers declared they would not, though satisfied on all other points, vote for an anti-abolitionist. So far well. The Chancellor of the Exchequer comes from Cambridge in a good state of mind, *quoad hoc;* Fox a decided friend; Grenville ditto; Lord Spencer, I believe, favourable, but not very strong; Lord Moira, I doubt; Sidmouth, Ellenborough; Erskine talking friendly to me, but always absenting himself; Lord Fitzwilliam, I am not quite sure, but I think favourable; Windham contra; but the great point would be, to get, if possible, the royal family to give up their opposition. ——— had a plan in his head (this strictly *entre nous*), suggested by his warm zeal, that we should send a deputation to the new ministry to make a sort of compact that we would befriend them as we did Pitt, give them the turn of the scale, &c. if they would promise

us to support the Abolition as a government measure. The idea is inadmissible for many reasons. The two parties would infallibly have different ideas of the practical extent of the obligation, and mutual misunderstanding, crimination, and recrimination would infallibly ensue. I have scarcely a moment in which to say that poor Lord Melville has, as I believe, a dangerous distemper, but one under which he may live twenty years, or may be carried off suddenly. I must break off. Kind remembrances.

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P.S. I broke off so hastily at last as to leave out my conclusion. Though any such express contract as that which our friend suggested would be inadmissible, both on grounds of rectitude and policy, yet I think we may and ought to contrive that the effect intended by it may be produced; and though I dare scarcely be sanguine, when I recollect with whom we have to do, yet I cannot but entertain some hopes, that the wish to mollify and even conciliate and gain over a number of strange, impracticable, and otherwise *uncomeatable* fellows, by gratifying them in this particular, may have its weight — at least, it will tend to counteract the fear of offending the West Indians, and I trust we shall carry some subordinate measures which government of itself might prescribe.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Broomfield, February 19, 1806.

My dear Muncaster,

Why, you are indeed a wanderer. — Do you intend to publish your tour? It will be a sentimental one, whenever it is written. I suppose you are showing your young ladies the world; and Bath is certainly a place which ought not to be left unseen by any one who would know the beauties of England. Now you are got so far westward, I think you will get to Plymouth, which is certainly the finest of all our British Lions — never shall I forget the impression it made on me. While I have been writing, another lion has entered — the Dean of Carlisle, who is just arrived from Cambridge on University business, in which Oxford also is concerned. He amuses me with his account of the Oxford doctors.

I have been trying to resume the pen ever since he came in, but in vain, so long as we were *tête-à-tête;* at length a second friend has entered, and by dint of setting them to discuss with each other, I may get on for a little. I am anxious that you should not quit Bath without receiving a few lines from me. By the way, my friend Creyke is at Bath with his daughters. He is a man of spirit, of principle, and of intelligence; one of those characters which are scarcely to be found in any other country than England. A justice; a commissioner of taxes; an officer in the militia; in short, a man who, for between thirty and forty years, has

been gratuitously devoting his time and his talents to the service of his country. I know not whether you observed last year a proposal to pay a chairman of the Quarter Sessions for the district of Salford; I seldom have been more jealous of any new principle, and was with difficulty prevailed on to consent to it, in that one instance, on account of the special circumstances of the case.

All this, by the by. — Now let me tell you a report I lately heard, which you have heard too, if your means of information become greater at all in proportion as you come nearer to the great centre of matter and motion — it is, that Fox took an opportunity, lately, of explaining a little with the King, assuring him, that though he had felt it his duty to oppose his Majesty's ministers, he had never lost his attachment to his Majesty personally, and to the house of Hanover in general; and I am assured he added, that he should be careful not to give his Majesty pain by pressing him, while he should be in office, on any topics the bringing forward of which might distress him. If this were so, and I heard it (though I wish it to be mentioned very reservedly) from pretty good authority, he must have alluded to the Irish Catholic question. But Fox has not lost his imprudence, as he proved by what he said both on the Union, and on the King's friends. Our departed friend's funeral is likely to be most respectably attended. I am glad of this, as you will be. Indeed, I wish you had been here, that you might have testified this last mark of your respect. I must break off. Kind remembrances to Lady Muncaster and your

daughters, to whom Mrs. W. joins me in kind remembrances.

Ever yours affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

HENRY BROUGHAM, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Temple, Wednesday evening.

My dear Sir,

I received your letter this morning, and afterwards dined in the house alluded to in my last.

I had written to Lord H. Petty very fully upon the subject of the Spanish Slave Trade, and I am happy to find, by a conversation with him this afternoon, that he is perfectly master of the subject which I had attempted to press upon his attention. He and I talked over a good part of it in presence of Mr. Fox, which I thought the best way of letting him take a share in the discussion or not, as he might choose. For I considered that this subject is more delicate, and involves a variety of nicer relations than our general question of abolition. Whether Mr. Fox listened much to us or not, I can't say; but he did not join. On the Slave Trade, in general, we talked a great deal — and you may believe all agreed. Lord H. Petty mentioned that you had a wish to begin the campaign, by trying how far a compromise could be effected with the Lords. Mr. Fox was greatly interested by this topic; but

neither Petty nor myself could point out any specific mode of making the attempt. Petty seemed only to think that you meant such a compromise as might comprehend those peers who had committed themselves against the grand measure. I should add that the company present were Mr. Fox, Lord Holland, Lord H. Petty, and myself. As this was the first time of my being in Mr. Fox's house, I could not take the liberty of starting matters in conversation, and a great many of the topics of the day naturally interfering, the Slave Trade was dropt.

I, however, contrived to say all I could think to Lord H. Petty, and explained the views respecting the probable influence of a vigorous support of our great cause, in favour of the Ministry at an election. To this he listened very attentively, and I shall again renew it. I have to add, that Lord H. Petty considers the matter in question as intended to be speedily communicated through him to his colleagues in the government. When I say that he carefully perused eight pages of a letter, and fourteen of an appendix upon the subject, during the hurry of his budget season, you will perceive how much he desires to be master of it. It is unnecessary to add that, in his situation, he could not give any decision; but what I could collect was highly favourable. My opinion is, from all I see, that it cannot, or at least will not, be taken separately from the general American question. Should you think my interference in its behalf with the new envoy, Lord Selkirk, likely to have a good tendency? I know him very well, and see him constantly. I shall endeavour to call in Palace

Yard to-morrow, but write this in case I should be prevented. Of course you will take no notice of its contents.

HENRY BROUGHAM.

HENRY BROUGHAM, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

1, Tanfield Court, Temple, 1806.

My dear Sir,

I called to-day to inform you, that I had lost no time in talking with Lord Holland upon the subject of our last conversation. Feeling as warmly as he does, upon every thing relating to the Abolition, it was natural that this communication should interest him greatly. He accordingly promised immediately to enter fully into the subject with Mr. Fox the very first opportunity. He perfectly agrees with you on the importance of conciliating, by all means, so weighty a personage as the one we alluded to — but doubts how far it may be possible. As for Mr. Fox's zeal, there can be no question about that — but some of those whom we had counted upon are scarcely sure cards. Among others, I am sorry to learn that Lord ——— is an extremely lukewarm abolitionist. Lord Holland, accordingly, has spoken to his uncle, and means to do it more fully and formally the very first opportunity. Hitherto he has not received any definite answer upon the matter in question; and he seemed to doubt how far Mr. Fox

would be inclined to pledge himself to exert himself in the manner pointed out. As soon as I hear further from Lord Holland I shall not fail to let you know.

In the mean time, does any thing more occur to you as possible to be done either publicly or privately for this cause?

I remain ever yours, &c.

H. BROUGHAM.

DR. BURGH TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

York, March 13, 1806.

My dear Wilberforce,

I wish from my soul that I were gifted with your acquiescence. I do not mean to say that, being ascertained of an evil, I cannot bear it; but that I am utterly incapable of discerning a good through that fog of evils by which we are surrounded. If, on the accession of the present ministers, I had ventured to entertain a hope, it is now completely rescinded; and I see them by the very same agency as in 1783, and with the very same machinery, making the very same approaches against the East India Company as, at that time, had very nearly reduced it to their obedience; and am I, from similar means, to conclude that different ends are in view? I see a Chancellor placed upon the Bench in Ireland, by whom the Commission of the Peace will be conferred upon half the Papists of the Kingdom;

and the case of Lord Fingall triumphantly brought into precedent for his justification. But I have done (do not flatter yourself, it is no such thing), and will only say in general, form, if you can, a body to obviate these and too many similar dangers: we are otherwise utterly ruined.

How are we to reconcile Mr. Fox's assertion, that Mr. Pitt would have willingly introduced him into the Cabinet, with his own exclusion of every individual that Mr. Pitt had actually introduced either into that Cabinet, or any other office whatsoever. I think I have still too good an opinion of the man to give credit to a single syllable he can utter. Veracity would, in him, be inconsistent with the existence of any other possible virtue. There were only two Acts of the late Administration to which I never could incline, the Union, and the restraint of the press; this latter might, I know, like the suspension of the Habeas Corpus have been but occasional and temporary, though not declared so; but I grow to fear, that the present men will find it as necessary to their occasions, as ever it could have been to those of the state. A free discussion of their measures, might prevent the establishment of their hostile projects; and they will think it better to forfeit their friends, who expect a repeal, than throw themselves open to the vigilance of all whom they have it in contemplation to make enemies and defy. With regard to Union, Mr. Fox has already slunk behind the civil maxim of *malum bene positum, &c.;* but, in consequence of so much disingenuity, I trust he will not find himself *bene positum;* I have little doubt that

disgust begins already to take place. Exert yourself; compact an opposition without delay; form a nucleus on which the public mind may wind itself, and thus be kept together: the presumption is against these men; the resistance to their measures should be, therefore, general; while to find an exception is the utmost that can be allowed to genuine candour. The volunteering system is already beginning to melt away, and no substitute is suggested. We begin to think ourselves surrendered to France: till now I never conceived that we might be sold to France. A few days ago, I was formally told by a Roman Catholic that I might set my heart at ease on the subject of their claims, for that the King had stipulated, with his new Administration, never to bring them (or a repeal of the Test, &c.) forward during his life; but it was added that they would never lose sight of the object, nor remit such vigilance as might seize on some happy moment, pending the time conditioned for. I heard, but answered not; the latter part was but the natural sequel of the former.

I hear that you spoke very well upon Lord Ellenborough's seat in the Cabinet, but am not informed what you said. Why will you not take care to have yourself properly reported; the public is not yet so stript of its consequence, but that it is worth while to put it into possession of an argument? Pray do you recollect, that when Charles II. changed his Council in 1679, and declared that fifteen of them should have seats *ex officio*, "one of the Chief Justices" is expressly named to be of this number, while the whole were only to be thirty. This fact may have been stated

now, but I have not seen it, and therefore give it to you as it stands. I seek not to analogise Charles's Council with our Cabinet, nor the principles of his Government with those that now prevail; as it is a fact, however, of which you might not have been aware, I give it you rather to obviate, than to use as a precedent, in which character it is certainly very defective; perhaps its operation is the other way.

What are you doing on your own most important question, and when do you bring it on? A letter from Clarkson to Tuke of this place, intimates that you are busy on the subject. The assizes are proceeding here, and I find that there is an idea of the dissolution of Parliament abroad, and that, too, upon grounds not very honourable to the parties that are now coalesced; for Mr. Fox is stated as forming the project, not so much for the purpose of surmounting the interests that are hostile, as of absorbing into himself that portion of the united Cabinet-interest that at present attaches to his fellows, particularly to Lord Sidmouth. I can conceive it all to be true, and rejoice in that want of cordiality and confidence that tends so directly to their dissolution; but if, indeed, they do resort to such a measure, I am anxious for your security in this great county, the independence and consequence of which you must maintain, and keep in a right direction. It is possible that efforts at a monopolising influence may be revived: they must not be submitted to. Lord Milton is not yet twenty years old; and I trust they will hardly think of disturbing the county by an effort at imposing any person whom, when he comes at age,

they may thrust out in his behalf; to take two chances, where one is so very likely to fail, is what their prudence, I think, will hardly venture. I really think he could make no offer of his service, were he even of sufficient years, that would not encounter a decided repulse from the spirit of the county. Lord Fitzwilliam is thought to be the person who has recommended young Becket to Lord Spencer; yet would I firmly rely upon the father of the young man to act consistently with his own former consistency. Leeds is not so slightly to be purchased, though I perceive it an opinion that this is calculated on.

The Morrits give us exceeding pleasure by their very favourable account of your house. They are copious on the subject of your children: may they, my Wilberforce, turn out whatever most contributes to their own happiness, both here and hereafter, and to the comfort and honour of Mrs. Wilberforce and yourself.

Most affectionately, my dear friend,

I am ever yours,

W. BURGH.

LORD GRENVILLE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Camelford House, March 25, 1806.

My dear Sir,

I shall take the first moment possible to converse with Mr. Fox and Lord H. Petty on the subject

of your letter *, and I need not say how happy I shall be, if I can in any way promote the objects you mention.

Yours most truly, &c.

GRENVILLE.

LORD WELLESLEY TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. †

Park Lane, April 15, 1806.

My dear Wilberforce,

I am very much flattered by your kind remembrance, and by the Archbishop's notice. I have thought it most respectful to write to his Grace, and to request his commands with regard to the time when he may choose that I should attend him at Lambeth. Whenever I may have the honour of seeing the Archbishop, I shall certainly submit to him my entire concurrence in your sentiments respecting the state of the establishments of the Church of England in India. The great difficulty to be encountered, in attempting any improvement, is the expense. Otherwise, nothing can be more plain than the defects of the present miserable institution, or than the nature of the most useful remedies.

I wish you would give a portion of your attention to the attack which has been made upon me in the House of Commons by Mr. Paull. If you are disposed to

* Bill for making effectual the order in council against the Slave trade.

† Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 350.

attend to it, I will furnish you with papers which will explain my conduct and motives.

Believe me to be, my dear Wilberforce,

Yours always most sincerely,

WELLESLEY.

LORD GRENVILLE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Downing Street, April 25, 1806.

My dear Wilberforce,

I grieve at the intelligence contained in your note, as if that standard be raised against us in the House of Lords, I know too well that neither reason nor justice, no, nor even policy, will avail much against it. We must, however, do the best we can, and I need not say that no endeavours will be wanting on my part.

Ever most truly yours,

GRENVILLE.

LORD GRENVILLE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Downing Street, May 9, 1806.

My dear Wilberforce,

Before I went down to-day, the bill had, by agreement, passed through the Committee; and it is to

be debated, Tuesday, on the report. I am perfectly aware that no amendment can be admitted; but having now got over the Committee, in which we could not have had the benefit of proxies, I trust that, for the remaining stages, we are quite secure; and that this degree of good, at least, may be considered as happily accomplished.

How ardently I wish that it may be only a prelude to a much more complete and satisfactory measure I need not tell you.

If I had felt any difficulty, or foreseen any, I would have troubled Mr. Stephen to have called here; but his papers were quite full enough for every purpose; and I knew he would not wish me to lose time (of which I have none to spare) in the mere ceremony of talking over the same things with him.

Ever most truly yours,

GRENVILLE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JOHN HUDDLESTON, ESQ. M. P.

Palace Yard, June 5, 1806.

My dear Sir,

I know I need not apologise for earnestly entreating your attendance on Tuesday next, the 10th inst., when Mr. Fox is to move a resolution, with a view of pledging the House to adopt effectual measures for abolishing the Slave Trade, as soon as may be con-

venient in the next session. The resolution, when passed by the Commons, is to be carried to the Lords, where it will, I believe, be moved by Lord Grenville himself.

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO REV. DR. COULTHURST.

Broomfield, July 24, 1806.

My dear Sir,

Many thanks for your West India discussion; your remarks are very just, and I wish there were many colonists equally free from prejudice.

I have often thought of something you threw out in a former letter concerning your enforcing your ecclesiastical rights. I am well aware there is much of an improper spirit, among even affluent people, towards the clergy: and though a desire to save the money be the chief operating principle, yet I fear there is also a profane disposition to be more niggardly towards the ministers of religion than towards any other class of public functionaries. This is bottomed on an inadequate sense of the value of religion, and of the importance of the ministerial character. I reckon liberality, not merely justice towards Christian ministers, to be a peculiar and urgent duty. Still, with all these principles and feelings, (taking also into account the very incompetent salary of the vicar of your populous town), considering that the vicars of the other great towns in

the West Riding, who are equally ill treated, have not yet enforced their rights — considering that you have no children — and some other circumstances, I own I could not advise you to be the person to move first in this affair; and even supposing the other vicars to begin, it would deserve much consideration what course you should take.

Let me know, however, if you have any further intentions of acting in this matter, and I will ponder the subject yet more. It strikes me, that this is just a case in which a clergyman should not be left to act for himself. His lay friends should take up the business for him, and he, himself, should never appear, — cannot this be done by the friends of the several vicars? This is enough (*sapiente*) to give you an idea of my plan of proceeding. I must break off, begging your excuse for this hurried scrawl. By riding at full gallop, remember a man in the same time goes twice the distance he would if he only trotted; and this holds good in penmanship no less than horsemanship. Farewell.

Believe me ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Lyme, August 29, 1806.

My dear Muncaster,

Can it be possible that I have not written to you since my arrival at this place. Yet, it may be so,

for never was I at a place where time has run away so rapidly, and it has, in so doing, reflected light on some very deep and difficult metaphysical questions. I believe, when day passes away after day, each the same as the former, without any events to mark or diversify, the time, when you look back on it, appears so foreshortened (if I may use the expression), that the day next preceding on which any thing remarkable passed, looks close to you, all the intervening space being nearly annihilated. My chief occupation has been clearing away an immense epistolary arrear; I have almost, but by no means entirely paid off all the debt, for it is in this mode of settling accounts as well as in the money way, that we have more to pay in consequence of delaying the payment.

My dear Muncaster; what an indecent thing for a Lord Chancellor to dine at Mrs. Jordan's right hand. It is mentioned in one of the cleverest and most entertaining letters I ever read, from our friend M. He, you know, both hereditarily and from early habits, (Mason, &c.) is no lover of Scotchmen, and I think the Edinburgh Reviewers would almost as soon stand fire from a pistol really loaded with ball, as from such a peppering discharge, not without abundant flashes in the pan too, to keep up the figure, as M. lets fly at them. I would send you his letter, but that the epistles of one's private friends are a sort of sacred deposit. I was drawn off into a metaphysical disquisition, I believe, when I was beginning to give you my history. I have been here near a fortnight, having spent the preceding fortnight in visiting different friends round Lon-

don. This is really a sweet place; I never beheld a finer sea-coast view, than that which I have from the study whence I am now writing. My brother Lillingston, who is away for a few weeks, lends us his house, and there we have shrubs and trees, &c. as you have, only no trees like yours, nor is the vegetation equal. But my paper admonishes me to send affectionate remembrances from Mrs. W. as well as myself, and to say farewell,

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WILLIAM SMITH, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Docketed, "Private. — Will. Smith, his own loss by a fire, and multo magis, Fox's death."]

Parndon, September 11, 1806.

My dear friend,

On my own concerns, as you are sufficiently interested about them to inquire, I must say one word. I hope we are very nearly insured; but I shall be a very great sufferer, having previously incurred prodigious expences and sustained considerable loss, all reimbursement for either of which, is by this accident and other circumstances set at an indefinite distance: or rather, in my own opinion, rendered utterly hopeless; but these things, though very serious, do not touch me to the quick. My children must all have somewhat the less, and my boys must depend yet more than other-

wise on their own exertions. Whether wisely or not, I feel a far deeper concern in the assured expectation of that event, which, ere you receive this, I conclude will have taken place. In point of social intercourse, Fox was more to me, previously to his coming into office; but when the thousand considerations pour in upon my mind, which rendered his life at this moment desirable, not only to himself but to the public — when I reflect on the anxieties and disappointments which have clouded over the few short months that have elapsed since he has had it in his power to do any thing — the untoward circumstances which have prevented his accomplishing the first wishes of his heart, and have for the moment, perhaps, rather injured his public character; that at such a crisis, the hand of Providence should snatch him out of life, and put an everlasting bar against the correction of past mistakes, or the execution of wiser plans — should deny him the consolation, above all, of enjoying that victory which he seemed on the point of attaining over our common enemy, the great object of our mutual detestation, and which will now exult over him with hopes, which God forbid should be realised, — that he should be deprived, I had almost said defrauded, (though I am sure without an impious meaning,) of that solid and permanent glory, which, had a little more space been allowed, I think he would have secured by conferring benefits on his country and on mankind; when I ponder on these things, I am apt to think his lot peculiarly severe, and when I look to consequences, but too possible not to be apprehended, I fear for multi-

tudes, and, above all, for the success of that most important cause to which I have already alluded. If Grenville should now cool as a friend, or Windham grow more violent in his enmity, who is, with half the efficacy, to stimulate the one or restrain the other — in short, who is to occupy his station? When Pitt died, as a great man, with many excellent qualities, and leaving very few who could challenge competition with him, I did sincerely lament him, but Fox yet lived, and I had much public, personal, and political (leaving out party) consolation. Now, with a high opinion of many who are left, I cannot flatter any one so much as to say that I think him quite equal to those who are departed, or place in him the entire confidence I have done in him, who I fear has already followed his illustrious rival.

How few are there to whom I could thus write; perhaps I say too much even to you; but I know how completely you will feel with me on one point, and how much on some others; and I have just received from Lord Howick and Lord Henry Petty such accounts of poor Fox, as leaving me without hope, even for a day, render this my most consoling employment. What we do, to do quickly, is assuredly one of the first lessons which such an event inculcates; that when in our private consultations we contemplated its possibility, the idea did not impel us to strive more eagerly to get more done during his continuance with us, I own I do greatly lament, but perhaps it was impossible; perhaps, for there is a direction wiser than ours, it might have been inexpedient, perhaps we may

yet be successful as soon as we ought to wish it. When in town a few days ago, at Clarkson's request (who is still here) I asked Lord Moira about an evidence, the lieutenant-colonel of his regiment, he immediately replied, "What occasion can you have for him? Surely that business is finished." We must, however, be far from thinking so, but view the deprivation of our great ally as creating the necessity for increased exertions on our own parts. I have not written to you sooner, partly because C—— did. We talked over the points of yours, and I do not recollect anything in which we disagreed either from each other or from you. I grieve at Lord Grenville's change of opinion, for I can call it no less. Abolition by duties with any supposable increase, is at best gradual, it is liable to all manner of evasion, and every chance of eventual defeat, whilst the great principle, that solid and unsubvertible basis of all our arguments and measures, is by such means almost virtually relinquished; and in addition to all the hitherto suggested objections, (in which I agree), I feel another, perhaps, rather a refined one, but I am sure it is often true, that where duties do not speedily cease by the destruction of the object taxed, it is their natural tendency to perpetuate it in some degree or other, by creating an interest in their own continuance, and often a very strong one too. Duties raise money, which affords emolument to many, both in the application and collection, &c., &c.

Your last suggestions respecting the expediency of attempting to obviate difficulties are very prudent and highly important, but present a formidable aspect. As

to Barham's plan, I will say more about it when I shall have received the letters. I fear it is wholly impracticable. Your account of yourself is very unsatisfactory; pray send me a better soon.

Affectionately yours,
W. S.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO HENRY BANKES, ESQ.

Lyme, September 25, 1806.
Thursday night.

My dear Bankes,

I have indeed, as your letter (just now received) remarks, a very numerous host of correspondents, and having brought with me to this place such a box full of their unanswered epistles as to employ me for a full month since my arrival, I never felt the force of the observation more strongly than at this moment. But it is with truth I assure you, that had I known your address, a letter to you would have been superadded to all my others, and what is more, would have been considered like the addition of a negative quantity in algebra, as subtracting from my load, rather than adding to it. Your account sets me quite a longing. It is, I suppose, in part the effect of imagination, and of old associations, but I feel a fondness for that country of lakes and mountains which is perfectly extravagant, and I seldom have been more strongly tempted than I was to take a beautifully-situated house, the lease of which was offered me, at the head of Windermere. Both you

and Mrs. Bankes will enjoy your ramble the more from having so long denied yourselves all excursions. I feel quite as you do about Fox, with some very strong apprehensions of our missing him in the case of the Abolition of the Slave Trade. The newspapers of to-day confirm the arrangement you had anticipated, and which is the best which the nature of the case admitted, that I mean of Lord Howick's taking the lead in the House of Commons with Fox's place. They have likewise done well to reinforce their ranks with Tierney. He, however, has proved himself less able in defence than in attack. I am looking out with some curiosity as well as anxiety to see where Buonaparte, who has suddenly disappeared from Paris, with a view as it is supposed to strike some military stroke, will come to light. I wish he be not too rapid for them once more. It really seems like the infatuation of Providence, *quos Deus vult perdere, &c.*, that the King of Prussia should resist the strongest temptations to join the late confederacy, while it was yet in untouched strength, and yet now, when Buonaparte has trampled on all his enemies, and exacted his own terms from Austria, after forcing Russia to retire home again, that he should select the present above all others as the time for setting bounds to French encroachments. It may end well; but I own I fear it will not.

But who, think you, paid me a visit here the other day? Not Nicoll, but ipse Robson; — it is really true. I own I was at first disposed to be a little savage, but there was nobody by, so I behaved, or rather "be-aved," though his first abord was not very well calculated to

soften prejudices, for he told me at once that he was come to ask if I could give him any intelligence concerning the dissolution of parliament. I was in some measure repaid for his visit by one curious, though far from satisfactory, article of intelligence. He had been invited to dine at Oatlands, on the occasion of a grand entertainment which the Duke of York gave to all the royal brothers. There were about twenty-five people at table, where (*credat Judæus*, I mean Goldsmid) Robson avouches he was admitted, and the windows down to the ground being wide open, a much greater number of outside passengers were to all intents and purposes in the room. When a cacoethes seizing the prince, who was perfectly sober, he made the whole party a speech half an hour long, in the course of which he declared that he might as well tell it now, since it would soon be known, that the whole royal family, from the King downwards, were decidedly of his own opinion, and of Fox's, that Great Britain ought to expend every man and every guinea rather than lose Hanover. I own I was not greatly edified by the declaration.

I have learnt, from good authority, that it is all but certain parliament will not meet before the end of November. *Entre nous* I am wishing, when we do meet, to be ready with a publication on the Abolition, conceiving this to be just the period when such a work may be of use; when ministry, being for the most part with us, people may be glad to be furnished with reasons for being earnest on our side, or for coming round. But owing chiefly to a succession of little indispositions, either of my own or my family's, since my mass of letters was a

little got under, I am only now beginning my work, and I doubt if I shall be able to finish it in time.

I must bid you farewell, with kind remembrances to Mrs. Bankes and to any friends of mine whom you may fall in with, whether Grimstons, or Lord Lowther and Lady L., or any other.

I am, my dear Bankes,

Your faithful friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ZACHARY MACAULAY, ESQ.

Lyme, October 18, 1806.
Saturday night.

My dear Sir,

I have but a single moment in which to reply to your letter just received — there is one objection — it is impossible: so at least it appears to me, and I dare not suggest the idea to Lord G., though, if I did, I fear there is no doubt what the result would be, neither could our friend ——. But I am as bad as the man about the bells, with his thirty-seven reasons for not ringing, when there were none. You talk of "the bundle of Slave Trade pamphlets." This makes me fear you still have not got the right sow by the ear, to use Henry the Eighth's elegant phraseology; for Lord Muncaster's books, thirteen or fourteen in number, were all together, several French, chiefly 12mos, some larger, one, I think, a folio. I understood that he had sent me

the original authors, except Astley's Voyages,—which I had, and Moore, and another or two, from whom he had extracted the facts contained in his pamphlet.

I shall be much obliged to you if you will send Beaver's African Memoranda, Moore's Travels, and the two last volumes of Burke's Works, in a parcel directed to me at Leicester. I hope, D. V., to pass through it about Thursday, so if the parcel be there on Monday morning it will do. Do not you go to Broomfield yourself about Burke's Works; I had rather go without them. I am not easy about dear Babington: — he is a saint, indeed.

Alas, my friend, I grieve to tell you how little I have already got on with my tract. I scarce can tell how it is; incessant interruptions, indispositions, stupidity, obliterations, &c. &c. &c. I hope parliament will not meet till after I know that Stephen will be ready. His West Indian, and my African portion may make up a whole. I have such wretched tools I can scarcely write, and I am half blind and asleep. All long ago gone to bed. Kindest remembrances.

Yours ever,

W. Wilberforce.

WILLIAM HEY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Leeds, October 24, 1806.
Friday night.

My dear Sir,

I was obliged to write to you in a hurry this afternoon, and wish to add a word or two upon the subject of your junction with your late colleague.

When he first consulted his friends about his conduct at the beginning of this week, he told Mr. Cookson expressly that he should stand neuter betwixt you and Mr. Fawkes. In consequence of this resolution, he has now been canvassing near a week in such places as he conceived most favourable to his interest. What obligation are you then under to take him with you to such places as are unfriendly to him, though favourable to you, and thereby injure your own interest?

Joseph Firth, of Roberts-town, one of the clothiers' delegates in the woollen business, who is one of Mr. Fawkes's agents, told my neighbour, Mr. Tennant, yesterday at Heckmondwike, that if you would now walk the Cloth Halls alone (i. e. without your colleague) he believed you would be received by the clothiers with as much enthusiasm as ever.

A gentleman from Bradford called upon me this evening, in the name of the friends of Wilberforce and Lascelles, to consult me on the propriety of joining your names in their canvass. He gave it as his decided opinion, that you would succeed the best at Bradford by going alone.

Laying together the best information I can obtain upon the subject, I am inclined to think that it is your interest to make a circuit immediately amongst the manufacturers in the western part of this Riding. Harangue them formally at every hall, and let a diligent canvass be made for you without taking notice of the other candidates. When you have found your own strength, you may then consider the subject of a junction.

It is true that Mr. Fawkes's interest is to separate you and your colleague. But if so large a body of your constituents as the woollen manufacturers will not vote for you both, are you to reject their kindness?

I have enclosed the circular sent by the Methodists. I must add to what I said about the Quakers, that many of them have imbibed the mischievous tenets of Paine, and adhere to Mr. Fox's party.

Your opponents reckon much on their pecuniary ability. I hope your friends will not suffer you to be borne down for want of their assistance. Adieu.

Yours ever,

W. Hey.

WM. BURGH, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

York, October 24, 1806.

My dear W.,

We have formed a committee for you, that under that name we might sanction any measure that might

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appear serviceable, and we have accordingly canvassed the city and neighbouring villages with great success. Most of those persons here who have given their votes to you have given their other votes to Mr. Fawkes. We are going on, as we think half the number in the vicinage is worth the whole at a distance.

Lord Egremont has declared himself your friend and Mr. Lascelles's. Sir Mark M. Sykes the same, but chiefly yours. He tells me that most of the Driffield hunt, who spend this week together at Driffield, are your firm friends, and that it is their opinion that if possible you should unite with Lascelles, as that would be a means of strengthening both. "I think (he adds) this ought to be strongly enforced upon both. If I knew when Wilberforce would be at York, Denison and I would meet him."

Mr. Duncombe, I understand, canvasses for you and Mr. Lascelles; but I say this upon report, not with authority, for you I am confident he acts. [Since that, I find it is certainly for both, but you are his object; and Mr. Comber, at Kirby Moorside, says, "We are exerting ourselves in favour of Mr. Wilberforce, and feel disposed for Mr. L., but shall discountenance any junction till after the meeting."] Digby Legard is your warm friend; Mr. Crowe of Kipling is your active friend, and favours Mr. L.

Sir Robert Hildyard, with his usual consistency, declares, "It is my intention to make use of what little interest I have exclusively in favour of Mr. W., unless circumstances should make a junction with Mr. Lascelles

advisable for him." His support is creditable to any cause; Mr. Chaloner also.

Half-a-dozen leading Methodists have written a circular letter to the members of their society, "that we feel it our duty unitedly to come forward in support of our present member Mr. W., who has on all occasions distinguished himself as the real friend of religion, and whose political sentiments, and unwearied exertions to procure an Abolition of the slave trade have endeared him to us and to our society at large. We doubt not that your views and those of our friends in your circuit will coincide with ours: if so, it would be well to recommend it to the friends of Mr. W. to exert themselves in his favour without delay. The canvass made here by the friends of Mr. W. is made on his own particular interest, distinct from that of the other candidates."

I have made so large an extract to calm your apprehensions. Mine, I confess, were miserably excited when I first heard they had taken such a step; but having seen the letter, I am set at ease: it contains nothing to injure you, and their numbers, I understand, are sufficient to do you good.

I understand that Lascelles is favoured by Bishopthorpe, but who stands next in favour, you or F., I cannot even guess. I have heard, but so loosely as not to deserve credit, that F. was the second object.

L. has not been well received at Leeds, the disposition of which towards you I believe to be more favourable; but the favour of such multitudes is not a subject of any certain estimate. Halifax, however, I understand befriends you, but they have there united your name in a

public advertisement with L.'s, and recommend it to other towns to do the same. Mr. Hinderwell has canvassed Scarborough with great success; Fawkes, through Sir George Cayley, has only got three votes there; the Langleys are your friends. Mrs. Osbaldiston of Hutton Bushel is Fawkes's; Mr. Thompson of Hull, and Dewsbury of Beverley, were called on very early, but have made us no returns yet; Reynard of Ripon is in the same predicament; Preston of Flasby also leaves us ignorant of Craven; Lord Grantham is with Mr. L., but whether with you or no we know not; Mr. Earle of Beningborough is for F. alone; Fox Lane, Sir Thomas Gascoigne, and Mr. Markham of Becca, whence the disposition of Bishopthorpe may be inferred, the same.

About Doncaster we literally as yet know nothing. We sent your address at a venture to Sheardown, the printer there, and have had no answer from him. Tooker, though strongly solicited by Lord Milton to the contrary, is actively canvassing for you; Lord Milton himself is doing his utmost against you in that district and in Sheffield. The Duke of Leeds is completely involved in the vortex of Wentworth House; but your old friend Alderson has succeeded in dividing many of the Kniveton votes in your favour. The P. of W. has been lately there a guest, and I have no doubt has signified his good pleasure on the subject. This is but inference, but must be true.

Lascelles has advertised for a meeting of his friends here to form a committee, at so late a day as Thursday next; in the mean time nothing is doing for him. Woolley is his agent, and seems to me to be negligence itself.

With regard to junctions I will say nothing; more must be known before there are grounds for decision on so nice a point. What information I have to give you here you have, and with it the heartiest good wishes of, my dear W.,

Your truly affectionate friend,

WILLIAM BURGH.

THOMAS BOWDLER, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

4, Gray's Inn Square, Thursday evening, 1806.

My dear Sir,

I must make an ungrateful use of the liberty you give me in your kind note, by postponing my visit to Broomfield; but you will forgive me when you know the cause. My mother's sisters are at Hamburgh, and I find that the late events have alarmed and distressed her a good deal. This makes me anxious to see her, and I am not likely to have an opportunity at present, but by going to Hayes next Saturday. The next week will carry me to Bath on a little business, so that I am afraid we shall not meet so soon as I could wish, but believe me I shall not long be absent from Broomfield after my return. I hope at your consultation about the slave trade, it was decided in favour of publishing; for every thing I see and hear convinces me that an authenticated statement of the real object in contemplation, and the facts on which its merits principally rest, is much wanted.

People are shockingly indifferent on the subject, and very incredulous. I had a great deal of conversation with Lord Sidmouth upon it yesterday. I am afraid he will oppose, though he spoke upon it feelingly and conscientiously. He rests on the impracticability, on account of the great disproportion at present subsisting between the sexes in most of the colonies, and the consequent impossibility of keeping up the present population, without first taking measures to increase the proportion of females. I shall not leave town for Bath, probably till Friday, and shall be most happy to be useful, if you can send me any work in the mean time, or tell me where to call for it.

Believe me, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant,

T. Bowdler, Jun.

Pray do not trouble yourself to answer this.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JOHN HUDDLESTON, ESQ.

Near London, November 26, 1806.

My dear Sir,

I am just returned home again, and I thank God I meet my family out of the west of England in pretty good health. I have not seen the newspaper of late, and not having yet chatted with my neighbours on the common, I had not heard till to-day, when I learned it from your

most friendly letter, that you had been thrown out; and I can truly assure you, that the intelligence gives me unfeigned concern, not only because you were a zealous as well as conscientious and hearty friend to the Abolition of the slave trade, but because you were, like myself, unconnected both with ministers and opposition, and disposed to promote the cause of religion, and morals, and the best interests of our own country, and of mankind. I repeat, I greatly regret your defeat, and it would give me sincere pleasure to see you once more enter the House of Commons. I thank you cordially for your very kind congratulations. Indeed, I have reason to be extremely thankful for my success, to that Providence, to whom I must ascribe it. I need not say, this consideration does not lessen my gratitude to the friends by whom I have been so nobly supported, while it greatly adds to the pleasure I derive from my victory.

I am just now beyond measure occupied — I must conclude this hasty scrawl.

If you come to town during the winter, it will give me pleasure if you will some day dine, and take a bed here. You will, I know, allow me to receive you as a man of business. Farewell, my dear Sir.

W. WILBERFORCE.

REV. DR. COULTHURST TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Mould Green, near Huddersfield, Dec. 12, 1806.

My dear Friend,

I write from the house of our common friend, Mr. Thomas Atkinson, whom Mrs. Coulthurst and I are visiting for a few days.

I received your very kind letter. You will be kind enough to put a candid construction upon my silence. Since the election, I have had much lee-way to make up. Inclosed you receive Mr. Wood's letter; we talked about it, if you remember, at York. I have sent Mr. Wood a full and complete answer, so that you need not give yourself the least trouble of writing to him. I also made proper acknowledgments in your behalf, to Mr. Franks, and to many of your friends in these parts. I cannot say all, for their name is (I will not say "legion") but "anti-legion."

Few events have given me more satisfaction than the late Yorkshire election. It will long supply me with an abundant source of moral reflection, and I trust will as long supply you. I think I see the hand of Providence in it. Our success was so far beyond the means; or as a philosopher would say, the effect was so far beyond all proportion to the cause. Your friends are numerous, zealous, and active; but we laboured under many disadvantages. The canvass for *you only* was begun and completed within a week, with the most perfect assurance

of success. Wonderful! I wish that men might learn hence to know the value of a good name. We ought to be thankful to a kind Providence, who, in this day of blasphemy and rebuke, has raised up amongst all sects and parties, amongst all ranks and orders, so many substantial friends of true religion and sound morality. May Heaven increase their number! My observation and correspondence in Yorkshire have, on this occasion, been very extensive; and I am clearly of opinion, that our cause in Yorkshire has been very vigorously supported by those three grand articles which govern the outward world, *i. e.* talents, family, and wealth. I think you may rely upon your friends, and their tried allegiance, for they are friends upon principle. Your speech after the election has done the cause much good.

Various addresses have been presented to Mr. Lascelles, and amongst the rest, a very heterogeneous one from Halifax. My name was put to it in my absence, for I was then with you at York. I would thank Mr. Lascelles with all my heart for his past services; but I would rather not have done it in so motley and multitudinous a manner. You ought to be supplied with a complete analytical list of the whole county, both of the "urbs," and "civitas," with topographical and biographical observations. I will in the spring supply you with my list from the parish of Halifax, and will in due time procure you lists wherever I can, throughout the West Riding. The sooner this business is completed the better. Mr. Lascelles was not a "fidus Achates" to us; we did much for him, he did nothing for us; or rather he was against us; or, as Cookson said to me,

"our friends were his friends; his friends were our enemies."

You will of course direct to me at Halifax.

Mrs. Coulthurst (who yields to none of your best and firmest friends in zeal and activity) unites with me in respectful compliments to yourself and Mrs. Wilberforce.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours sincerely and gratefully,
H. W. COULTHURST.

J. BOWDLER, ESQ., JUN. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

25, Old Square, Lincoln's Inn.

Dear Sir,

I should have answered your kind note earlier, but I really have been more hurried during the last two days than I can remember to have been at any former period. The copy of your "Letter" which you ordered to be sent to me has not arrived; but Mr. Macaulay furnished me with his. I have read attentively that part which you point out, as relating to the gradual abolitionists. I am afraid it will hurt Lord S., for his feelings are very much alive on the subject; yet every thing you say is so strictly true, that this consequence (though I really lament it) appears to me quite unavoidable. Had it been my duty to write upon the subject myself, even though my name had been prefixed,

and with a full consciousness that it would be read by Lord S., I hope I should not have been induced to state the matter less strongly. I must say, too, very sincerely, that the manner in which the argument against the gradual abolitionists is conducted appears to me as candid and as little offensive as the nature of the subject admits: perhaps I should except one passage. It is that at the close of the 301st page, from "*It has often been justly urged,*" to the end of the paragraph. If I could have wished any thing omitted, it would have been those two sentences. Yet this would be rather from tenderness to Lord S. (who is fully convinced of the demerits of all the adherents to the slave trade) than from any sense of injustice done to the gradual abolitionists; as to the argument itself, so far as impracticability is the ground of opposition adopted by the gradual abolitionists, it seems to me unanswerable. But either Lord S. originally took a different position, or he has since shifted it; for it was not the impracticability, but the mischiefs thence arising, which he urged in the discussion we had upon the subject. To this the observations respecting the alleged impracticability appear to be no answer; but as it rests entirely on the assumption of great inequality subsisting in the number of males and females throughout the colonies, a very complete reply seemed to me to be furnished to it by those parts of your work which I read at Broomfield.

I have stated what occurred to me, on reading the part to which you directed me, frankly, as you wished; and can only, in conclusion, breathe an ardent prayer, that it may please God to prosper your endeavours in this cause;

that Africa may be delivered from a scourge which has so long wasted her, and this country from a load of guilt, which to those who recollect the moral government of the world ought to be a subject of deeper regret even than the miseries it occasions. I am very anxious to hear whether the debate took place last night, and what was its issue. Whenever it is in my power to get down to Palace Yard about dinner-time, I shall be truly happy to avail myself of your kindness. And I remain, dear sir,

Ever faithfully yours,

J. Bowdler.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD SIDMOUTH.

London, Friday, Jan. 30, 1807.

My dear Lord Sidmouth,

Had I seen you yesterday in a less hurried way, I should have told you that you would very shortly receive "from the author" a piece on the Abolition, which was to have been a pamphlet, but which, unavoidably, has grown into a book. I found when in Yorkshire such general ignorance on the subject (even among many friends of Abolition no great information) that I resolved to state the true nature and principles of the question. It has been a matter of great embarrassment to me, how to do justice to the cause, without saying any thing which might seem inconsistent with the real esteem and regard I entertain for you. Per-

haps if I had been able to consider more, I might have hit the right medium better; but I can truly declare that though *currente calamo*, yet that all I have written concerning gradual abolitionists has been under the influence of right and friendly principles and dispositions. You will, I am sure, allow for me, and for the serious view I take of this subject; and thence concur with me in opinion, that I could not, with a safe conscience (and considering the immensity of the interests at stake, without the grossest criminality) omit any statement or argument which might really tend, by stating the truth, to promote, in my judgment, the extinction of the greatest mass of guilt and misery which ever existed on earth. I scribble in extreme haste before I go out of town, and in momentary fear of interruption; a state which necessarily produces distraction of mind, and prevents consideration and all measurement of propositions and phrases. I have often inquired about your *res domestica*, and take a lively interest in it. May the Almighty bring good out of evil!

Begging my friendly remembrances to Lady S., your son, and daughter,

Believe me, my dear Lord,

Ever sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I thought Lord Henry Petty did very well last night.

T. BABINGTON, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Docketted by Mr. Wilberforce. — "Babington — excellent picture of his mind."]

My dear W.

Though I cannot call on you to day, and shall not be able to see you fight your battle in the House, you are and will be much in my mind. Send a verbal message how you do. May God bless you and your cause! Do not be too anxious, for events are in His hands, and He may see fit that you should not be victorious at present. In our zeal to do His will, we sometimes proceed as if we wished the government of human affairs to be in our hands instead of His. Remember how many years elapsed, and what mortifying events took place, between the time when Moses was marked out as a deliverer of his nation, and left the court of Pharaoh, and his final success in the work assigned to him. "In patience possess ye your souls," is a direction which no description of Christians, perhaps, is more bound to bear constantly in mind, than those who are signal instruments in a great and righteous cause. Consider how much more you have been enabled to do in yours than any one who has preceded you; and how thankful you should be for having been thought worthy to sow the seed, even though it should be appointed to your successors to reap the harvest. Though this should be the case (contrary to all our wishes and prayers) you will be in the very situation of our Sa-

viour, who tells his disciples, that they would reap what others had sown.

I sat down with a design of only asking after your health, but have been drawn on to preach. You will excuse me. My mind was full of floating thoughts which occurred to me this morning. I am pretty well again, but must be careful. Jean is, I hope, better, but keeps her chamber. Once more, God bless you!

I shall station a servant at your house to bring intelligence of the event to-night. Do get somebody (Gisborne, if with you), when all is over, to give me on a scrap of paper the event and numbers of the division.

T. B.

LORD GRENVILLE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Dropmore, February 24, 1807.

My dear Wilberforce,

I have just received the account of last night, and I cannot forbear adding a very few words to the congratulations which you will receive from all quarters on this great event, which we may certainly now consider as quite decided.

I can conceive nothing in this world more gratifying than your feelings must be on this occasion, and to you it will not sound strange to say, that I trust we may all of us, who have in any degree contributed to this great

work of mercy, each in proportion to our exertions in it, look to a reward far beyond those of this world, from that Being who has declared to us that inasmuch as we have done it to our fellow-creatures, He will accept it (such is His unmeasurable goodness) as done even to Himself.

I really feel quite overpowered with the thoughts of this success, and can readily conceive what your feelings must be, who may justly say to yourself, that to you and to your exertions alone this thing is to be attributed.

Ever most truly yours,

GRENVILLE.

RALPH CREYKE, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Marton, February 27, 1807.

My dear Sir,

Yesterday's and this morning's newspapers have so delighted me and mine, that I must write to say, that we rejoice with you upon your virtuous triumph. Your friends would feel the warmth of the panegyrics more than you would; and yet although *superbia*, when it can truly be said that it is *quæsita meritis*, be allowable, you will think more of the substantial good and happiness of others than the exaltation of your own character. The conclusion of the Solicitor General's speech was most beautiful, and I hope that Mrs. Wilberforce was in Old

Palace Yard, and if she was upon the watch, as all affectionate wives are, for her lord's return, she might hear the three cheers, which my paper represents to have been loud and distinct. No Roman general with the senate at his heels could step with a firmer tread than you crossed from the House of Commons home. But if I go farther I may not be able to hold my horse, and come to the disgrace of a tumble, and therefore I will pull up in time. I was surprised to see the minority so small as sixteen, and shall be anxious to see their names. Upon some question the late Lord Chancellor Northington declared that the non-contents had it, and four lords only went below the bar from a full House. Some one wondered how he could be so much mistaken. His answer was "I had a mind to see who the fools were." I expected a long speech from Mr. S., who is now, I understand, partner in a West India house, and therefore one of the gang. Where was the mild and gentle member for Sussex? Perhaps you will be so good as to send me down Mr. Whitbread's Poor Bill, and I will return it to you with my opinion upon that subject. It is a disease like the ague — every one has an infallible nostrum to cure it; but I am regularly bred, and think bark the only safe prescription. In the same estimation I hold the statute of Queen Elizabeth. I warn you, therefore, what opinion mine is likely to be. Some little ingredients adapted to each constitution may be added, and the dose may be exhibited in the most fashionable form, with currant jelly, or any thing more palatable, but still the efficacy of it must depend upon bark.

I must return to the newspaper; I was very much pleased to read so good an account of Mr. Fawkes's speech. He could not have chosen a subject more creditable to his excellent heart, or more suited to the display of his abilities. He would also sleep well on Tuesday morning. You must be all so much above this nether world, that frost and snow cannot affect you; we mere mortals in this remote corner are suffering under the severities of Greenland. Last week the weather was in Midsummer, and now in Christmas.

With our kindest remembrance to your happy family, and best wishes of a continuance of health and happiness to yourself,

I am, my dear Sir,
Ever yours faithfully,
RALPH CREYKE.

WILLIAM BURGH, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

York, March 17, 1807.

My dear W.

I shall never be in a state of comfort with regard to your bill, till I see that it has actually received the royal assent; every delay threatens mischief, and the amendments (so called) in your House may induce new difficulties in the House of Lords when it is returned to them. Do not suffer its adversaries to carry a single point; if not utterly suppressed they will endeavour to

rise again, and Mr. —— already looks forward to 1808, for the repeal of this act of 1807. As to Mr. ——, his argument, from the decrease of his own negroes, has in it something so, — I know not what to call the hideous deformity, — but had I used it, I should feel an extinction of hope; I should feel that I was a murderer — what, because he has destroyed, does he look for more subjects for destruction, and consider this as a reason for the supply! give him his position, and do you draw the inference rather than deny it, and I think the man that can then abet him is just as bad as he. I like his brutality to you; it can never affect you, while the recoil must necessarily stagger himself. I conclude the subject, by once more urging you to a tenacious adherence to the original form of the bill, as far as is practicable, and to the utmost feasible expedition, and even to threats against the slavery of the negroes now in the West Indies, if your present measure be any farther resisted.

When James II. apprised his parliament that he had employed papists in the army, and looked for their sanction of the measure, instead of authorising him to proceed, they made him an offer to indemnify those that had already accepted of commissions; and why you should now go farther I profess I am unable to discover. Are revolutions so desirable, that we wish to put things into the situation that provoked the last? or do we suppose that this is a situation to which, with all our efforts, they will not return? The capacity and bravery of papists are a current theme, and let me allow them, but who will persuade me to allow their fidelity to a pro-

testant throne? The argument drawn from their adherence to our ancient kings is answered, by saying that these kings did not sit upon a protestant throne. Occasions do not offer daily, but look to the three or four that have occurred in later times, and how few are the papists of any consequence, that have not incurred forfeitures or experienced mercy. Rebellion and a perpetual reference to papal supremacy, openly in ecclesiastical, and though not now acknowledged, yet certainly and even necessarily in state matters, have characterised their body during the whole of the last century; and at present I profess I see nothing brought forward in their behalf but menaces of still more active exertions, provided they are not indulged. The frightful rebellion in 1642 was carried to the recorded extremity in consequence of Lord Strafford's array of papists in Ireland; and in Ireland we are now daily amused by exaggerated statements of popish population and power: is it, therefore, our part now to give leaders to the danger with which they thus threaten us? The men of this description who on board our ships, or in the field, have acted with distinguished bravery during the present war are privates, and consequently not men in whom any confidence was ever reposed; as brave men, therefore, let them be rewarded, but not with commissions to command: and so very obvious is this inference, that the use of this and similar arguments, (as leading to the measure in hand,) amount to almost a demonstration, that there is treason at home, as surely as ever there was treason at Ulm. Had James been complied with, would the acquittal of the seven bishops have been hailed with acclamations by

the army at Hounslow? O that we may now find seven bishops to repay the compliment that was then paid to a protestant bench! While papal supremacy is the object, while it is the very creed, what else can toleration mean than establishment? *Permission* to *power*, and that, too, a power which identifies itself with the power even of the Almighty, is a flat contradiction in terms; if the present claims of popery are admitted, all is indeed subverted. We are daily told of the superior illumination of our brilliant age; there is one light, however, the light of experience, which we ought not to extinguish, and which, if we walk by it, we shall find fully capable of casting into comparative darkness, the coxcomb pretensions of our modern candid speculations. But King William is forgotten: the nature of popery is not considered: it is not known, though it may be easily discovered, if men would but look: but it is a hard thing that we are in danger of seeing the overthrow of our once happy constitution by the union of lurking propensity, with vanity and ignorance. (Cowardice perhaps may be added to the group.) My dearest Wilberforce, I tremble when I think of the precipice we stand upon, and that must excuse the importunity with which I try to induce your opposition to the ruinous measure. I write, too, when I have but little time. It is not for a community of legal protection that they look — they *are* protected; it is civil power, which they will exercise to the ruin of protestants, and destruction of their civil protection.

I hope Mrs. —— mends; she might have learned, from her own practice, to fall without such frightful

consequences; remind her from me, of her being rolled, on an illumination night, in the mire of Bath. I wish her better with all my heart.

To you, my dear friend, to Mrs. Wilberforce, and all you love, I sincerely wish every good.

I am most affectionately yours,

W. Burgh.

St. Patrick's day—who opposed the commencing encroachments of Rome?

There is in Dublin a handsome equestrian statue of King William III., round which it has been always customary for the lord lieutenant, the houses of parliament, and all officers of state, &c. to go in procession, on the anniversary of the battle of the Boyne. This year this ceremony has been omitted by the representative of a king bequeathed to these realms by King William, for the purpose of maintaining the protestant religion against the agents of Rome; it has been omitted by the representative of William Lord Russel!!!

REV. T. GISBORNE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Yoxall Lodge, April 10, 1807.

My dear Wilberforce,

I really know not that I can suggest to you any thing worth reading on either of the topics concerning which you call upon me. To begin with the more im-

portant — the prints. Were the prints engraved and lying before me, I perhaps could say whether the lights were tolerably well kept together, and whether the trees were like trees, at least, English trees; but as to suggesting subjects, I can do nothing: and of the features of Africa I know nothing beyond the face of a negro, except a little of that of a lion. Perhaps the artist may choose the allegorical line. In that case, I would submit for your judgment "The progress of taming an Ouran Outang." In the first plate, he may be represented as eating a child; in the second, as wheeling a wheelbarrow; in the third, mending his waistcoat; in the fourth, making punch; in the fifth, dancing a minuet; in the sixth, installed a Knight of the Garter. If the artist determines to proceed in the common-place way he must follow common-place items; beginning with scenes of kidnapping and village-burning, and closing with peace, and plenty, and religion.

Aurea nunc, olim sylvestribus horrida dumis.

He may enliven his scenery with groups of elephants, and hippopotami, and camelopards; and with knots of slave-traders hanging themselves in the back-ground.

So much for pictured civilisation. On actual civilisation I have still less to say; indeed, nothing beyond common-place; for common-place it is to talk in general terms about setting up schools, sending missionaries, and introducing manufactures. Local knowledge must come in to show how these generals are to be reduced practically into particularities. I hope that you will be able to make some good use of the forts and public

establishments which we possess along the African coast. Cannot these lions' dens be transformed into central reservoirs for distributing knowledge, religious as well as commercial? They seem to meet the demand. Δος που στῶ.

I heartily desire every good result, under the Divine blessing, from your great meeting* and its decisions. Keep your measures simple, and beware of theorising.

Kind wishes, &c.

Ever affectionately yours,

T. GISBORNE.

RIGHT HON. SPENCER PERCEVAL TO A MEMBER OF MR. WILBERFORCE'S COMMITTEE.

Lincoln's Inn Fields, May 21, 1807.

Dear Sir,

The above is intended for Wilberforce's election-subcription. I have hesitated about sending it before, on account of the peculiar situation in which I stand at the present moment. But I think it rather hard that, because I am Chancellor of the Exchequer, I should be deprived of the means which every body else has of showing either that he is a friend of W., or a friend to the Abolition of the slave trade. At the same time I can feel that W. himself may not like that my name should appear among the list of his subscribers, and I must therefore beg before you put it down, that you will con-

* Formation of the African Institution. Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 361.

sult W. on that point. The only difference will be, that you will apply it anonymously, if he disapproves of the appearance of my name, (which I think he may do very rationally, and therefore certainly without any offence to me,) but if he sees no objection to my name appearing, I do not think I need feel any, and in that case you may put down my name or not, just as you think it will best promote Wilberforce's cause, and serve his interest, without injuring his character for independence or any thing else. I fear his contest will be expensive; but I have no doubt, if his friends do not desert him, that he will unquestionably succeed.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

S. PERCEVAL.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO W. HEY, ESQ.

Brighton, August 15, 1807.

My dear Sir,

From the time of Mr. Sheridan's first announcing his Bill * I was on my guard, and I only kept back in the earliest stages of the business, because for various reasons, too long to be now communicated, I judged that to be the course of conduct most likely to insure my ultimate success. I much doubt whether he was serious in mean-

* Mr. Sheridan's Bill was to take the jurisdiction of ale-houses from the Middlesex magistrates. Mr. Hey had expressed his fear lest it should lead to the destruction of the authority of magistrates in general.

ing to carry the measure through — not but that he is likely to be more in earnest, more consistent, and more persevering (alas!) in such a case as this, than in any other. He seems to live on that, to me, melancholy distich, "Life is a jest," &c. When he was chatting with some of the government about his speech on Irish affairs, he justified himself by saying, with his usual laugh, "Consider, I have not made one rebellious speech this whole session! I must make one!" Though he has had an almost Herculean measure of strength of constitution, yet, as his faculties now betray some symptoms of decay, I suspect it will not be long before he breaks entirely. Yet, with all his vices and extravagancies, there is a certain degree of political principle — but I have dwelt longer than I meant on this motley character. * * * *

RIGHT HON. SPENCER PERCEVAL TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Docketted — Bird's Place, &c., and my independence.]

Dear Wilberforce,

I understand you perfectly; and am too old and experienced to flatter myself that I have any power of persuasion which could procure a change of determination in so old and established a character as yours, and especially as you have so many reasons to be satisfied that you are in the right course.

With respect to your relation, no step nor determination has yet been taken that I am aware of to displace him; but you will not be surprised if some little feeling should be excited by the appointment when you know the circumstances of it. It was one of the last acts of the existing government, who, while they were so clamorous against the principle of granting reversionary places, granted the place of Collector of Buenos Ayres, which was so far from being in their possession to grant, that it was in the possession of the King of Spain; and the grant, if it operates at all, must operate upon the reversionary interest which the King of Great Britain was to acquire after having destroyed the title and possession of the Spanish government. You will not, therefore, wonder, that the grantee may, without any communication from government, entertain a doubt whether his grant will be confirmed; but I believe he has had no intimation whatever to that effect, and his alarm arises from the nature of the thing.

I have not sent you a card to dine with me on the eve of the session, viz. next Thursday, only because I was not sure whether you would like it. If you wish, I shall be much pleased to see you, and wish you to send me word. It is a meeting, you know, to hear the speech.

Yours very truly,

S. Perceval.

RIGHT HON. SPENCER PERCEVAL TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Downing Street, Saturday evening, December 19, 1807.

Dear Wilberforce,

According to your request I have forwarded the memorial you enclosed to me to the Board of Trade, though I do not immediately see what they can do upon it. Of the value of Sicily, both in a political and commercial point of view, I believe his Majesty's government are fully sensible: what the events of war may accomplish I cannot be answerable for; but I do not conceive I am disclosing any secrets which I ought to conceal (though I do not wish to be personally quoted for it) when I say that the evacuation of Sicily has never formed any part of the intentions of government, although the difficulty, under many possible circumstances, of retaining it, has made me feel it improper to assure any merchants that their trade thither would be safe.

I directed a short note of our Portuguese news to be sent to you. I hope it will appear to you, as it does, I confess, to me, of very great importance to the interests of the country at the present moment.

Your friend, Mr. Ramsden, I have not seen yet, but I have tried to get him to dine with me to-morrow.

I am fully impressed with the necessity of setting the face of government against the offensive and abominable project of interdicting the circulation of religious knowledge in India, and I believe the Board of Control are impressed with the same feeling.

Yours very truly,

S. PERCEVAL.

MRS. H. MORE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

B. Wood, January 4, 1808.

My dear Friend,

I cannot forbear writing one line to rejoice with Mrs. W. on your convalescence: I do it with the less regret as it demands no answer.

I need not, indeed I cannot, say how deeply anxious we have been on your account. We were happily relieved from additional anxiety by the kindness of Mrs. H. Thornton, who sent me a daily bulletin from the beginning of your illness down to yesterday. I no less fervently bless God for your recovery, than I offered up my poor prayers while you were ill.

My favorite Nicole, in a letter to a pious friend of that famous penitent the Duchess de Longueville, who was given over for ten years, says to her, "While you have been dying, one half of the human race have actually died," and goes on to prove, by calculation, that in twenty years a number equal to the whole stock of mankind die. In my own little way I often think what multitudes have perished who were in perfect health when I was taken ill a year and a half ago; — even this autumn, beginning with the Duchess of Gloucester, and ending with the Dowager Lady Bathurst, I have lost seventeen old attached friends! If I persist in living, at this rate I shall very soon have none left.

By the way, are you much acquainted with Nicole? I wish some of our high professors would read him. There is a delicacy in his morals that I have rarely met with; indeed I think in his letters he reigns supreme in

regard to *les petites morales* — subjects too particular and minute for sermons or professed treatises: — the domestic charities — conquests over temper — prejudices — petty indulgences — self-love, &c. God Almighty bless you!

Yours ever, my dear Friend,

Most truly,

H. More.

Poor Patty has deafness, and a stunning complaint in her head, added to her other complaint, but does not abate one jot of heart or hope.

Poor Horace Noel!

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO CAPTAIN ——.

London, May 17, 1808.

My dear Sir,

When my dear Mrs. W. expresses (as she has but too much occasion for doing) her kind regret at seeing so little of me, I often reply by asking her what she would feel if I were in your profession?

I really quite felt for your lady (to whom, when you do see her, I beg my kind remembrances by anticipation, if you will excuse the Irishism) when I heard that you had been called away from her so soon after your marriage. Do you remember the instance, amid innumerable others which shows the condescending kindness with which the Almighty entered into the feelings of His creatures, evidenced in the permission granted to the Israelites to remain at home with their brides for a whole year, and not to join the army till that period was expired. . . .

May 28.

When I had written thus far, I was forced to break off, and it is literally true, that I have scarcely had a minute at my own disposal, or at the service of my friends, ever since. We are kept up almost every night in the House of Commons till two or three o'clock, (sometimes much later,) and my weakly frame renders it necessary for me to borrow, or rather steal, (for it is not restored again, borrowing, therefore, is a very improper phrase,) as much for rest from the following morning as has been taken from sleep in the preceding night. And then, as this day, (near three o'clock,) from the time of my coming out of my bedroom, my house has had an incessant succession of visiters till now, when I have slipped out to a neighbour's to use my pen, if possible, for an hour—even here, however, I have been discovered and interrupted. I trouble you with all these egotisms, partly because we naturally mention our grievances in writing to a friend, and partly because it will account for my being so bad a correspondent. Do me the justice, however, to believe, that you are not forgoten by me; and I heartily wish it may please the Almighty to bless you with every comfort, both here and hereafter I must break off, having a multitude of unanswered letters beside me. Believe me always, with cordial esteem and regard,

My dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

CHARLES GRANT, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Russell Square, July 16, 1808.

My dear Sir,

I told you of the general import of certain proceedings of the Bengal government against the missionaries in that country, and of the tenor of the papers which came home, on that subject. Those papers are now to be answered, and the chairman and myself have an exceeding difficult task to get the Court and the Board of Control to agree to any answer framed on what we think proper principles, — that is, admitting the duty of introducing Christianity into India, laying down also the necessity of discretion in all attempts to that end, recognising the right of the Government to interfere where the conduct of the missionaries shall appear likely to hazard the public tranquillity; and, lastly, distinguishing in the proceedings of the Bengal government what has been consistent with those principles, and what has gone beyond them. We think it of great importance that the sentiments of the Court should be so laid down on those points as to settle the general question concerning missions to the East, and to leave nothing open for future discussion but the conduct of missionaries in the exercise of an admitted right, and the conduct of Government towards them. We have prepared the draft of a despatch to Bengal on this subject; but the President of the Board of Control, — to whom we have first shown it, wishing to conciliate his concurrence, in order the better to deal with the Court, — greatly disagrees with us. We understand, however,

that he means to consult certain members of the Cabinet on this subject, and among them Mr. Perceval more particularly. I have so little acquaintance with him, and am otherwise so delicately circumstanced, that I cannot enter into it with him; but it is of great importance that he should rightly understand all the bearings of it before he gives his opinion. I wish with all my heart you were near enough to hear me more at large upon it, and to speak to him immediately, for the consideration of it will come on soon. As this cannot be, I hope you will feel yourself at liberty to write to him. The general importance of the subject, the interest you take in it, and the high probability of its soon becoming a theme of public discussion, with the leisure you now have, may be sufficient reasons for your addressing him upon it. The points most necessary to be enforced on his attention appear to me to be these:— 1st, that if the missionaries are chargeable with the imprudence of abusing the deities, prophets, or religion of the natives, they should be censured, and all practices of that kind restrained; but, secondly, that under colour of preventing such improprieties, all preaching should not be forbidden, especially to those Asiatics who are already Christians; 3dly, that in disapproving and prohibiting the intemperance and indiscretion of the missionaries, and in guarding against the danger of any popular feeling on the score of religion, the orders be not so given as to indicate hostility to the principle of introducing Christianity; but that, on the contrary, 4thly, the duty of imparting the knowledge of Christianity to the natives, in such manner

and measure as may be done without the danger of any political evil be distinctly recognised.

I could wish that for your fuller information you had all the papers relating to the subject before you, but those from Bengal cannot be sent. The draft we have prepared I think may, and if it come to my hands in time to-day, I will forward it to you in great confidence. In the mean time, I enclose a copy of a short letter, with which it was transmitted to Mr. Dundas.

I hope you, Mrs. W., and all your party, enjoy the cool and tranquil retreat of Barham Court. We are still toiling here in the midst of weather truly Indian. Mrs. Grant and my young people much as usual. The aspect of public affairs is wonderfully improved. It is the Lord's doing, and I trust for good. I remain ever

Your very affectionate

C. GRANT.

P. S. I beg my best respects to Lord Barham. Pray return me the copy of the letter to Mr. Dundas.

RIGHT HON. SPENCER PERCEVAL TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Downing Street, July, 1808.

Dear Wilberforce,

Pray do not be scrupulous of breaking in upon my precious time, but write to me without mercy when-

ever you feel an inclination to do so. . . . . I have told Mr. Maer that I will see him to-morrow.

The slave trade question, as far as Spain * is concerned, is very interesting; and if an opportunity occurs, you may depend upon my doing any thing in my power that I think likely to be practicable and availing to forward the views you have upon it. I have spoken to Canning, and I believe him to be equally desirous to do the same. Thank you for all your good advice.

Yours very truly,

S. PERCEVAL.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Docketed by Mr. Wilberforce — " Dear Stephen, his heart, picture of."]

Serjeants' Inn, July 30, 1808.

My dear Wilberforce,

When you say, " O this bad world," it is not strange that folks like me complain; and yet, on recollection, that O is a sigh for what folks like me are not so apt to sigh for, " sin." To be honest to myself, however, I do grieve for the wickedness of the world, as much as for its plagues and troubles, though I fear generally with a mixture of bad temper.

I think it is you who have remarked, " if any man doubts the corruption of mankind, let him try to do good, and he will soon be convinced," (perhaps it is, let him try to *be* good; either would be just). I may see

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 371.

the nature and sources of this corruption in a wrong light, but need no proof of its existence. I protest there is some temptation to aim at wrong ends, that one may find "a nail that will drive," and not labour like poor Sisyphus, all one's life long. At least one would be tempted to haul in the oars, and float with the tide, since there is no making way against it.

And yet, my dear W., all this is wrong, and ungrateful, and unmanly, and unchristian. Have we not a gracious Master, who reckons not what we offer in His service, but what we aim at, and with what spirit and views? He does not pay us "by the great," as the farmers call it (by the piece), and leave us to take all the risk of bad yielding, but counts every lift of the flail. Really, "what wouldst Thou have me to do?" is very often, and may it always be, my anxiety rather than, "what will come of it?" Bad as man is, God can do all the good in the world that He sees fit, with or without our help. He does sometimes graciously permit our right endeavours to succeed. You have had much of such rewards, and even I have had some. If we had more, would it be so well for us? Really, if men could always produce virtue and happiness among their fellow-creatures proportionate to their endeavours, the thing would be so pleasant that it might justly be said, "Ye have your reward." The wickeder the world the worse for it, but the better perhaps for those who try to mend it, and to mend themselves by it. Let us persist, and God will give us, one of these days, finer tools and better materials. I was in a worse world in the West Indies, and God brought me to England. I thought my new

world here bad, and tried, though faintly, alas! to get a little above it, and God brought me into a better one — into the circle of such people as you and your B., and my dear S., and Babington, &c. &c. Now I shall not be able to mend this world, except in one way, "*fungar vice cotis.*" . . . By the way, a hundred observations of the ways of Providence in what the world would call trifling incidents, but which by their actings on the temper and heart are important in the sight of Heaven, have long convinced me that in this new system I am a satellite, not a primary planet, placed in it more for your sakes than my own, though for my own, too, in a subordinate degree. It was otherwise in former situations, and I am often greatly struck with the feeling of this inverted order in the dealings of Providence towards me; though by no means with any sense of discontent; rather curiosity and admiration. I reflect on it with an idea similar to that of Anthony, who said, I think, that his own good genius was always superior to the genii of other men with whom he was conversant, except Octavius, but in the presence of Octavius's genius his own became crest-fallen and subservient. But I must not travel you further at present into my invisible system and providential discoveries, and will only add I am perfectly serious in this parenthesis. . . . I say I shall not be able to make your shoulders a jumping board to something higher; but if, by God's blessing, I could go up with the class, as the very last or lowest member of it, it will be a great thing indeed, and expecting, as I do, nothing higher in this earthly school of ours, I regard the present form as the shell. When we burst it, the

same beneficent Teacher will place us probably in a world where, compared to the present, there will be no propensity to evil, and yet in my, perhaps, unwarrantable speculations, education will not end here. Higher degrees of virtue, purity, wisdom, will still be before us, perhaps in a boundless succession. The conclusion is, "I will endeavour, with God's help, to struggle against sin, inward and outward, in this bad world, more than I have ever yet done, with patience and perseverance; and for this, among other reasons, lest I should find myself hereafter in a different nebula from my dear S. and you."

I remain, my dear W.,
Affectionately yours,
J. STEPHEN.

No answer is desired to this. I was in the humour for such kind of scribbling, and no other, but do not you waste time the same way, I beg.

CHARLES GRANT, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

India House, August 30, 1808.

My dear Sir,

I have written to Mr. Cordiner for information about the practice of the Dutch government, and of Mr. North. We have in this House a question of nearly the same nature, respecting the temple of Jaggernaut; that is, the Bengal government had interfered on the appointment of its priests and services, but afterwards withdrew from the management of its interior affairs,

confining themselves to a tax on pilgrims and regulations of police. In answering their proceedings on this subject, Parry and I propose to tell them that, on principle, it is improper for a Christian government to take upon itself any regulation of heathen worship — any nomination of priests or direction of their services. The Board of Control will not allow this principle to be brought forward, and are, moreover, for justifying the tax on pilgrims at Jaggernaut, because the Mharattas and Mahomedans levied it. Now they levied it directly as a tax for the privilege of resorting to a place of sanctity. We say that it is improper for us to levy any tax of this nature from heathens, except merely to defray the charge of the police necessary to be maintained in the environs of the temple. I know not how the matter will end. Mr. Dundas is gone to Scotland. I fear Lord Castlereagh will be against us, and also Holford.

I wanted to tell you the *denouement* of the other matter (the answer concerning the missionaries) but time failed. We could get no alteration in the last draft you saw, except one at the suggestion not of either of us but of Mr. Perceval. You will recollect the passage, "we are far from being averse to the introduction of Christianity," &c. — the sentence now stands thus — "we are anxious it should be distinctly understood that we are far from being averse," &c. We entered a minute on the occasion. It was not intended to be strong, nor to provoke heat or debate; but I hope it contains what is essential, and capable of being turned to account hereafter. I enclose it, begging you will return it.

We had hardly closed this business when a new one arrived — a complaint from the Bengal government against Buchanan, for a memorial he delivered there to Lord Minto. The memorial has the features of Buchanan's other pieces — a good deal of truth, ability, indiscretion, and offensive language. He is come home, and I have told him something of the effect of his writings.

My dear Sir,

Ever affectionately yours,

CHARLES GRANT.

J. BOWDLER, ESQ. JUN. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

25, Lincoln's Inn, Thursday night.

My dear Mr. Wilberforce,

Don't think I mean to dun you with letters and letterlings; but before you leave Eastbourn and get out of my knowledge, I must thank you for the many kind things you have said of me at St. Boniface. They have travelled round (as such matters generally do) and so reached the ear of the person who ought last to hear them; for I must confess I had not firmness enough to hear them without delight, and I am afraid, in such a case, delight is danger. To be sure, I ought to bow, and smile, and excuse myself, and —

> "Your friendship, sir, your judgment wronging,
> With praises not to me belonging," &c.

But instead of this pretty coquetry, which only betrays the vanity it would conceal, may I in real simpleness and sincerity of heart request you, at once, to increase

my obligation for the favour received, and prevent its proving hurtful by conferring another. You will guess what I mean to ask — it is no common thing, and what no common friend ever does — to be told of my faults. I know you would do this, without asking, in case of a great offence; but there are a multitude of lesser errors and defects that retard a growth in holiness, and diminish the means of usefulness, which we too generally overlook in ourselves, and seldom endeavour to correct in our friends. To say that I am conscious of falling continually into these (would I might say only these !) is very common-place humility, but it is true; I have often lamented that so few are willing even to "hint a fault;" and if you will sometimes perform this most friendly office, believe me, whatever may be my unwillingness to improve, I shall at least be grateful for the correction.

How strange and how melancholy it is that we cannot realize, even in a qualified degree, the delightful visions that the imagination so readily bodies forth? When one thinks of a circle of Christians united by mutual affection, animated by the same motives, pressing towards the same object, servants of the same Lord, children of the same Father, we can scarce force from our minds the idea of the most intimate and endearing communion among them, with perfect openness and confidence. It seems of course that each should be wakefully alive to the imperfections of others as well as to his own, and all grow rich by the bounty of all; a bounty which is twice blessed. But in this sad world — it is needless to shade the picture — there are so few who really like to be told their faults, that nobody cares to do it; the business

is so bad that it is gone quite to decay. Do you remember Felicia and Floretta in the Rambler? bosom friends from their youth, till one unhappy day, Felicia said, "My dear Floretta, don't dance next birth-night, you were not successful last year." "Thanks, dearest Felicia, —friendship — sincerity," &c.: but her turn came next: "My dear Felicia, you have one little foible — your voice is weak, and you really should not attempt to sing." What could be so kind, and who so grateful as Felicia? but adieu to affection. All this is against myself, and, perhaps, I should prove like others, yet I would fain try the experiment; I think I could bear reproofs from you, as the veriest cur will take a whipping contentedly from a hand he loves.

I have lately read "Zeal without Innovation," and should like exceedingly to know what you think of it. To me it seems to contain a great deal of very valuable and original truth; I read it with great pleasure, and hope it will do much good. Yet I own I was not quite satisfied. The style is at times so defective, that no sense of the importance of the matter can make me quite unobservant of the manner. Sometimes the author labours to write well, and then, like the witling in the "Rape of the Lock," he "dies in metaphor." Sometimes he is so slovenly, that a school-boy would have been flogged for it. And, which is very unaccountable in a man who possesses so very just and clear an understanding, the expressions are continually so obscure, and indeed so inaccurate, that the idea is not brought forth; one sees what he means to say, but the thought seems to perish in the birth; and this too frequently

where it appears quite inexplicable how he should have missed the right words. I am afraid these defects of manner will prevent the work from being read as widely and admired as much as it deserves; for in these days of luxury in every thing, neither gods, men, nor booksellers will endure a bad style. I own, too, (though it argues some presumption in me to judge a writer of so superior an understanding) that I am a little displeased with parts of the work even in their substance; particularly with the chapter on the faults of evangelical preachers. What he says may be true; I fear it is true of some among them; yet surely it is said rather too passionately and without sufficient discrimination. It is somewhat unfair to incorporate men, and then seizing on particular blemishes, affix a bad character to the body. Let men be judged either collectively or singly; if singly, none can complain; but if collectively, the utmost you can reasonably claim is to be allowed to state an average; and I cannot but think the evangelical body would have no reason to fear such a trial. But nothing can be less equitable than to incorporate men for one purpose and then analyse the body for another, the censor having it in his own choice to consider them either separately or collectively. There is too, I think, a slight tendency to another fault, so serious and so common that even an approach to it is alarming. Is not religion a little too much represented as a matter principally of temporal importance? One hears so much among the common order of preachers about the benefits of Christianity to society, and how it binds men together in a firm compact of confidence, advances the dignity of a

nation, &c., and among the high churchmen, of our venerable establishment and the necessity of due subordination, the alliance between Church and State, and that ever beloved thirteenth chapter of the Romans, that one, perhaps, is apt to be a little over-jealous of the true dignity of religion — the blessed seraph that resides

> " Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
> That men call earth ; and with low-thoughted care
> Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
> Unmindful of the crown that virtue gives
> After this mortal change."

But I am ashamed of having said so much in depreciation of a work entitled to very high praise. I trust and believe that it will diffuse a great deal of valuable knowledge, and thereby tend to soften the bitterness of controversy. The Bishop of London, I hear, says he could subscribe to every word of the work, and my Bath aunt has " no words to express her admiration of the head and heart of the author." Adieu ! this is at least no letterling, and looks like a begging epistle. Yet I really do not expect or wish for a reply unless you happen to have a very idle interval. Believe me, with real affection, your obliged servant and friend,

J. Bowdler, Jun.

I am afraid my uncle will think you a dangerous visiter at St. Boniface, for you have got possession of my aunt's heart. I believe she is a very pious woman.

LORD CASTLEREAGH TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.*

Downing Street, September 9, 1808.

My dear Sir,

I enclose for your private information the letter I have written to Ceylon relative to the schoolmasters, which I hope you will approve, and consider to be as much as can be done, under the present imperfect state of our information. We are waiting with great anxiety for farther intelligence from Portugal and Spain. The next accounts from both must throw important light upon our future prospects and duties.

Believe me, dear Sir,

Yours ever very truly,

CASTLEREAGH.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ROBT. OSBORNE, ESQ.

East Bourne, September 13, 1808.

My dear O.,

Many thanks for your friendly letter, which has this day found me with all my family by the seaside. It is for Mrs. W.'s health and that of the young ones that we come here, for though they none of them bathe, we hold that sea air alone is of great service to all of them: and for whom is it not equally expedient, we may ask, to judge from the universal passion for the sea-

* *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 379.

side which seems to prevail in this part of the world? All along this coast, every house is taken; and houses which people would not think of inhabiting at any other places, they willingly pay many guineas per week for, and are thankful for the preference.

I think my wife has not received so much benefit from our excursion this year as she did the last; still it has certainly been of service to her, and I mean to continue here D. V. some weeks longer. I have but few acquaintances, and therefore I do get a little, though really even here but a little, time for reading. Letter writing is my grand business, and the pile of unanswered epistles which I brought out of town with me was so great, that it is not long since I answered the last of them.

The account of the Hull dinner I saw in the Hull paper, (not the Rockingham, by the way, which I never see.) Surely it was *infra dignitatem* to have —— at the head of the second table. Is the Rockingham worth my perusing? if so I would order it: but unless when there is some unusual state of intestine fermentation, county newspapers scarcely are worth their charge, and I take in three at least already. . . . . It has been raining almost every day for the last three weeks, in this less humid climate; what then must have been the case at Buxton? Do let me know whether the church, which was talked of as long ago as when I was a frequenter of Buxton, twelve or thirteen years ago, and which I heard was actually commenced three or four years ago, is yet finished. The want of a place of worship has been long the disgrace of the place, and of the great man who is the patron of it. But as his

steward said to a friend of mine, why sir, people don't come to Buxton to die, but to live.

I must not conclude without congratulating you on the glorious achievements of our arms in Portugal. I own I conceived, in spite of his character for obstinacy, that Buonaparte would find some pretext for retiring from the contest; but by his late proclamation . . . unless, which is not impossible, he means to draw the Spaniards into negociation, and then to concede that in a treaty, which, following immediately on the defeat of his forces, might have appeared to be extorted from his weakness . . . he seems resolved to prosecute his avowed purpose, and fix one brother on the Spanish throne. If he does persevere, the contest will be dreadful, and the loss of human life shocking; but I cannot help thinking he has waited too long; he has suffered the Spaniards to gain time for collecting and training their force. The charm of French ascendancy is also broken, and after the victories which some of the Spanish insurgents have gained, the others will be ashamed of not doing as much. But I must break off, for if I venture into this great subject, I shall be drawn into taking up another sheet, and then —— So, begging my kind remembrances to Mrs. O. and to Broadley, if he be arrived, and any other common friends, (Frank used to be a Buxtonian),

I am, my dear O.,

Yours very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P.S. Have they not been reducing the distributor's allowances again? *Entre nous*, there is an officer, an

acquaintance of ours, in the Stamp Office, who places to the account of his own credit (as revenue saved) all the money he can squeeze out of the distributors. But surely he is under a temptation to go too far. Do give me some sense on this head at your leisure.

WM. HAYLEY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

September 14, 1808.

My dear Sir,

Had I the wand of a magician I should be tempted to transport you, and your fair temple of domestic felicity, with all its six delightful columns, flying through the air into my little garden; but not having any magical powers, I must content myself with expressing my regard for you, by a mere compliance with your friendly request, of sending you that epitaph on our favourite Cowper to which I had alluded. I have hitherto kept it in privacy, though it was honoured with commendation by two friends of mine, of very powerful though of very different minds — the bishop of Llandaff and the late Lord Thurlow! With the latter I had a curious correspondence concerning epitaphs on Cowper. His lordship tried to compose one himself for his early associate, but he did not succeed in forming an entire epitaph, though he produced a few good lines, blended with others of an opposite character.

He always indulged me in the privilege (of which I

am very tenacious), "*fari quæ sentiam*," and I never flattered his politics or his poetry, though I was often charmed with the energy of his intellectual and colloquial powers: but I am giving you too long a preface to a brief composition.

Accept the following, with the cordial benediction of your sincere and affectionate

HERMIT.

REV. MR. STOREY TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Colchester, December 19, 1808.

Dear Sir,

Your kind note, enclosed in Mrs. W.'s letter, demands my grateful and early acknowledgments; and your renewed attention to the subject entered upon at Clapham, and the delicate manner in which you have introduced it, invites my confidence, and encourages me to write without reserve.

Your annual ten pounds has been chiefly expended in continuing the little school for girls, which your late dear aunt* set on foot near twenty-five years ago, and the same mistress or teacher is still living: what remains has gone to assist the poor.

To your enquiry, of what has been done from another quarter, I must return such an answer as will probably surprise you. Mr. —— wrote me a long letter with many apologies, saying he could not afford it, and that

* Sister of John Thornton, Esq. Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. i. pp. 5. & 283.

he was obliged to withhold his usual donations to the poor of various other places, &c. &c. I was grieved at all this, and knew how sadly many would suffer in various ways, and could not account for the defalcation; but when I read in the papers of "splendid breakfasts," &c. I said to myself, "surely my friend will find a bank-note for the poor, and no longer plead the want of money;" and impressed with a sense of the inconsistency, I ventured to quote a pious saying of an old and valued friend: "If I do not give more, God will take more away." It grieved me not a little that I should have occasion for such a quotation.

You know, perhaps, that I entered upon my labours here, under the kind and affectionate patronage of Mr. J. Thornton, who treated me with almost parental consideration, saying to this effect, — "by receiving such company as may wish to come about you, your expences may rather exceed your income, but never mind that; tell me how you stand at the year's end, and I will help you out." This was a most liberal offer, intended to free us from all undue anxiety, of which I never intended to avail myself. But coming down to Colchester the next summer, he asked me what we owed; on replying, very little, he put a red leather purse into my hands, with twenty guineas, and said, if you want more you shall have it. I replied with tears of gratitude "it is enough." Seeing me delicate in my health, and wanting exercise, he afterwards sent me a horse, and now and then inclosed me ten pounds to help to keep it. His son, our M. P., likewise gave me a horse which I now ride. After all the affection and tenderness which I expe-

rienced, you will not wonder that the memory of J. Thornton has long been dear to me, and I feel a tender interest in all that concerns the health and comfort of his grandson, and rejoice that he bids fair to tread in his grandfather's steps. . . . . .

MRS. H. MORE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Barley Wood, January 4, 1809.

My dear Friend,

Having been long in the expectation of hearing of your arrival at Bath, I had some faint hope that we might have caught a glimpse of you here. The weather, however, has proved such, that I most disinterestedly rejoice in knowing that you are safe at home. With my best love, I congratulate Mrs. W. on the alliance with Mr. Neale, whom I have known and loved ever since he was two years old, though I have now lost sight of him by my total seclusion.

I hope you like your new habitation. I hear it is handsome and comfortable.

Has Hatchard sent you "Cœlebs?" It was lying at Bath for you. The author had hoped completely to escape detection; had neither confidents, counsellors, or critics; of course there are many incorrectnesses. Many people write to me to say they are sure it is mine. H. Thornton assures me it is not; that the author is a clergyman of his acquaintance. Harry, however, is

mistaken. "Cœlebs" is mine; hastily (much too hastily) written to amuse the languor of disease. That it will do good I am not sanguine; that I wished to introduce principles into the Circulating Library, which, though quite common-places to the religious, are new to the novel reader, is certain. I know not how it takes in London, for my earnest desire of concealment prevents my making inquiries. I shall be glad to know you do not quite condemn it. By this post, I avow it to Henry only. I desired him to tell you, but think it more friendly to tell you myself, though I am in so much pain I hardly know what I say: I am afraid the sufferings of the body will be seen in the decays of mind in my book. For the last month I have been worse than usual, and when I get an interval of ease in my stomach, I have pains in my teeth and face which almost make me frantic. This has attended my whole illness — now near three years.

I hope all your young ones are thriving. How do you yourself stand this polar winter? Neither P. or I have been outside the door since September: she has been very bad.

I have great delight in Paley's sermons. To me he was clearly a converted man. It was pleasing to see the principles of real religion worked out with his pellucid clearness, and almost without the terms usually employed by older Christians. How I rejoice in these sermons for his own soul's sake! There is so much humility, too, and self-distrust — so unlike his natural character.

We are wild about Spain! I should be more confi-

dent of success, did not the Inquisition and Mexico hang over the cause. What a moment is the present! God bless you all!

Yours,

H. M.

RIGHT HON. SPENCER PERCEVAL TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Dear Wilberforce,

If you should happen to see *The Morning Chronicle* of to-day, you will see a paragraph, which, as it charges me with a degree of personal vanity and proud arrogant pretension, which is as nearly as possible the direct reverse of the fact, I am anxious it should not for a moment make that impression upon your mind, which I should be so extremely sorry you should receive. Pray, in justice to all parties, suspend your judgment upon the points to which the paragraph relates, till you have the means of being fully informed.

Yours very truly,

SPENCER PERCEVAL.

The answer which I have obtained, and which I thought was sent by the Treasury to your blanket and carpet friends, is, that the question is in a course of legal decision in Ireland.

RIGHT HON. SPENCER PERCEVAL TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Downing Street, May 5, 1809.

Dear Wilberforce,

I am sorry I cannot encourage you to hope for a favourable answer on the subject of your shopkeepers. I shall, however, be glad to see you on Monday, between one and two.

It * was mentioned to me last night by a person in the House of Commons, that he thought you had seen the names of the places in which my corrupt practices, through Wellesley's agency, are to be attempted to be charged: if without any breach of confidence you could let me know them, it would at least narrow the field in which I am to hunt for my game; for of course you will easily imagine, that I shall be desirous of anticipating as well as I can, for the purpose of preparation for the day of charge, the nature and quality of the offences for which I am to answer. Corrupt practices comprehend in different minds so many different shades of practice, from direct bribery down to almost the civil expression of the wish of a minister for a man's success, that it is not easy to have a notion of what I am to expect, especially as the more or less of caution with which a secretary to the Treasury may have written his letter, or mentioned one's name, may give the character and colour to a transaction which may be under parliamentary inquiry. And although I certainly am not conscious of having done, in respect of any seat

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 407.

in parliament, any one thing which I should have a hesitation to declare to you in private, at the risk of all that is valuable to me in your good opinion, yet I cannot say that I feel at ease, either with regard to myself or to the public, at the idea that the secretary of the Treasury, who has acted confidentially under me, should be put to the torture of an examination before a committee of the House of Commons, to disclose all the circumstances which he . . either by direct or implied authority from the minister under whom he acted . . may have done, upon which parliament may animadvert, or by which the public may be excited.

I am, dear Wilberforce,

Yours very truly,

SPENCER PERCEVAL.

I shall direct the messenger to wait for an answer to that part of the letter which applies to the names of the places.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD SIDMOUTH.

New Palace Yard Hotel, May 26, 1809.

My dear Lord S.

I wrote part of a letter to you some time ago, and had I not gone out of town during the recess to see my eldest boy, who is with a clergyman in Oxfordshire, I should have travelled to pay my respects to you. I really feel worse than uncivil in never having knocked at your door, but yet I can truly say that the omission

has in no degree arisen from any unfriendly cause, but that you and yours have been often in my mind, and that I have inquired about you from time to time of common friends, with the interest of real regard. But my health is not so strong as it used to be, while my business is full as great as ever; so that I am forced to beg a vote of credit from all my friends, for the omission of the ordinary attentions.

I was going yesterday again to take up my pen to finish my long neglected letter, when it occurred to me that you might possibly be disengaged on Monday next, when we have a holiday, and would do me the favour of dining with me at Kensington Gore about five o'clock. You would meet Lord Teignmouth and the Bishop of Salisbury, who is an old friend of mine. I know you do not wish to be treated like a great man, or I should not write to you thus freely. I really should be glad to have some conversation with you on public affairs, which are in a very comfortless state, I fear. I wish, also, to mention to you, that my friend Gisborne will come to town (to me, I mean) in about a fortnight; and that if you would like to know him, I should be very happy to be the instrument of bringing you together. I don't know whether you have heard that the Bishop of Durham offered him a prebend of Durham the other day, which he refused, I own, to my regret.

I beg you will not trouble yourself to write me an answer; but as you ride, and my house at Kensington Gore is close to the park, you can perhaps look in upon me some day in your *equitation*. I will thank you for a single word verbally, or in writing, to the New Palace

Yard Hotel or Kensington Gore, to say if you will dine with me.

I am ever my dear Lord S.,
Very sincerely yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

MR. PARKER TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Docketted, "Mr. Parker, freeholder—good natured whimsical letter."]

Doctors' Commons, June 1, 1809.

Sir,

The late Dr. Laurence having heard that I had a vote for the county of York, made a very special application to me, on the 2d of June, 1807, to go down to York to vote for Lord Milton; and said that, if I would consent to go, a carriage should be provided, and my expences paid: to which I replied, that I had promised several friends in the Bank, that if I should go to York I would give you a vote. The learned doctor then said, that should not make any difference if I would go, as you were then so much ahead of Mr. Lascelles, that your election was secure. Accordingly, I went on the third and fourth, and on the fifth voted for you and Lord Milton: having done so, Lord Milton's committee told me, that as I had given you a vote, they could not provide a carriage for me or pay my expences back; that if I could not pay my own expences back, I must apply to your committee: I mentioned it to one of them, but declined making any application for expences. Carriages being at that time very scarce, I bought a horse, and

had a very pleasant ride home, by way of Lancaster, Liverpool, Stafford, Warwick, and Buckingham.

On my return, I told the doctor that he had played a very pretty election trick upon me: he laughed heartily, saying, he hoped the ride would be serviceable to me in my health; and I really think he was right, therefore I do not complain; but I told him I would take opportunities to acquaint both you and Lord Milton thereof. I have written Lord Milton to this effect, and now having written so much to you, I have kept my word with the doctor, which I always make a point of doing. Now, all I ask of you is, that you will have the goodness, any open day, to free the enclosed to my tenant on the estate, for which I gave you and Lord Milton each a vote: it is one of the small and most western estates on the border of the county, in the parish of Slaidburn, and within fourteen miles of Lancaster, and hath been in my late father's family above seventy years.

I beg leave to wish you health to enjoy your seat, and that you and Lord Milton may be returned to parliament at every succeeding election without a contest, and am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

R. PARKER.

P.S. Should you oblige me herein, I hope you will let a servant send it to the post any day next week, or the following week will answer my purpose.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE HON. JOHN JAY.*

East Bourne, Sussex, August 1, 1809.

My dear Sir,

Though so many years have passed since we saw or heard from each other, I hope I do not deceive myself when I presume that we continue to retain each other in friendly remembrance, not without taking an interest in each other's well being. Such, at least, I can truly declare are my own sentiments and feelings in relation to you; and embracing every opportunity of inquiring after you, I heard with sincere pleasure the other day, from an American acquaintance, that you were living in health and comfort, though retired from public life. But why do I say, though retired, when I can most sincerely aver, that with a view to health and comfort, and those of mind as well as of body, no situation in life has ever presented itself to my imagination under so hopeful a form as that which my favourite poet describes, as

"Domestic life in rural pleasure passed."

I forget whether you are a lover of poetry; if you were so when you were young, I think that even in advanced life the author of the above line, Cowper, will still be dear to you. His piety gives unfading charms to his compositions.

But I am in danger of expending all the time for which I must venture to detain you, without proceeding to the business which gives me occasion — an occasion which, I own, I am glad to seize — to address

* Formerly American Ambassador in England. Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. ii. p. 65.

you after so long a silence. I am aware, indeed, that your retirement may prevent your taking any part in public life, even in the case I am about to mention; still your opinion, your good wishes, may be useful to us. Since the Abolition of the slave-trade, an institution has been formed, consisting of a considerable number of the most respectable members of both houses of parliament, as well as of other men of consideration and worth, with the Duke of Gloucester at our head, for the purpose of promoting civilisation and improvement in Africa. Of course, all our hopes are grounded and bottomed in the cessation of the slave-trade. Now, from the operation of the war, and of other causes, this traffic is stopped, with a very trifling exception, which, though trifling, we are trying, and that successfully, to do away throughout all that immense part of the continent of Africa which is north of the Line, and indeed much farther; unless, as it may be carried on by your countrymen and our own, in direct violation of the laws of both countries. We trust we shall be able, by sending ships of war to scour the coast of Africa, to suppress the British slave-trade; but this will be of little avail, if the traffic may still be carried on in fact, though prohibited by law, by the American slave-trader; nor do I see any prospect of preventing this abuse, unless a convention could be made between the two countries, by which the ships of war of each should be authorised, and even encouraged (by the hopes of gaining by the forfeitures), to seize and bring in for adjudication the vessels of the other, when prosecuting this unlawful commerce. I rather believe there is another particular, in which it still remains for your

country to render its law similar to ours, by subjecting to forfeiture any slave-ship of any country, and under any flag, which is fitted out in and cleared out from an American port. Now, my dear sir, may I hope for your assistance towards the production of the effects I have specified? Knowing to whom I am writing, I will say no more on this head.

I cannot address you without tracing my way to the period when we were last together, through the long and interesting interval which lies between that and the present moment. What events have since happened! What events may take place in the same number of years yet to come! How many whom we loved have gone in the last thirteen years! How many will go in the next! How strongly, my dear Sir, are we admonished to place our happiness on a firmer and more secure basis than it can enjoy in this world, which never more than of late verified the character given of it by one of our greatest and best churchmen, Hooker, that it is full (made up, I think he says) of perturbations. How astonishing is it to see men of penetrating understandings, and of deep and large views, confining their regards to this limited scene, apparently insensible to the existence of any thing beyond it! But I beg pardon for thus running on, and I stop before my pen has got the mastery of me. I will detain you no longer than while I express my hopes that you are well and happy, and assure you that I shall never cease to take an interest in your welfare.

I remain, with respect and regard, my dear Sir,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

East Bourne, August 17, 1809.

My dear Muncaster,

It seems quite barbarous to suffer your affectionate heart to remain distressed with one painful apprehension about me and mine, and therefore, though in a shocking state as to arrears of business, with a list of unanswered letters as long as my arm, &c., I must send you a few lines of friendly remembrance and salutation. We have been at the sea houses all along. I was not aware that you knew East Bourne; when can you have been here? It is a vastly preferable place to Brighton, unless you take in our want of royalty, — a want, however, which I can bear with patience. I thank God, Mrs. W. has profited from our residence here, though not so much as if she had not, from an idea that her children would profit more from her own immediate cognisance, left her governess behind. Really I knew not how much noise six young children can make in a small house, till we were all boxed up under this roof.

I congratulate you on the Spanish victory. Does the Almighty mean to pull down the image He has set up? I have always expected that Buonaparte would, some time or other, be put to confusion by means deemed beforehand very disproportionate to his strength; and that perhaps when at the very climax of his greatness. As for this Austrian war, I don't much relish it. It is so short a time since the ascendancy of the French arms was so complete, as to make the heart of every Austrian soldier . . . the fault probably of the commanders, or

at least of the officers more than of the men . . . sink within him on the very sight of a French battalion.

Did you see the account of my colleague's great dinner in the newspapers, and a standing committee formed for the preservation of the Whig interest in Yorkshire, especially for insuring its triumph in all elections? It is really curious to see these people such ardent patriots, (only because they were turned out of office,) that such fellows as we, who never had any connection with office, are treated as a set of place-hunting ragamuffins. I must break off. How time does fly away at these places. Visitors are fewer, however, than common. Two very different M. Ps. here, Lord Temple and Davies Giddy. With kind remembrances, in which Mrs. W. joins,

I am ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A FRIEND.

Near Newport Pagnel, August, 1809.

My dear Sir,

I really was not aware that I was your epistolary debtor, but in truth I have been for eight weeks past doing little else than paying off a heavy arrear of letters. By the way, this great correspondence has been for some time, I had almost said, the sole business of my life. Its size does not arise so much from my having been for many years member for Yorkshire — though that circumstance must doubtless have some effect —

but it proceeds from my having been for near thirty years in public life, with the character of not turning a deaf ear to those who state their several sufferings. From whatever cause, however, it proceeds, the effect has become a standing grievance to me, and I have been thinking how to correct it. My friends, according to their different tempers, prescribe different remedies. My spirited and excellent brother, Mr. Stephen, says, "Never answer them." But I cannot bring myself to think that this would be consistent with the courtesy and kindness of Christian demeanour. Henry Thornton, who you know is all over Adam Smith (with one grand exception happily) advises me to assign a certain specified time daily to this employment. But this, without reference to the quantity I have to write, and to my being sometimes so entirely engrossed otherwise for days together, is to apply a standing measure to a line varying in all degrees from a point to a line almost illimitable. In writing to a friend, we naturally speak of ourselves, which must be my apology for this discussion. Almost as soon as the House rose, I went with my family to East Bourne, where we continued for six weeks; and after spending about a week with our friend Henry Thornton, we came to the village whence I now write to you.

My Irish friend Knox, of whom you must, I think, have heard me speak, passed two days with us at Battersea Rise, with a reverend fellow-traveller of his, Mr. Jebb, who has a non-cure in the diocese of Cashel — a man of superior sense, acquirements, and piety. Knox is a wonderful creature, and so eloquent, that you scarcely know

how to refuse your assent to the strangest propositions which he pours forth most copiously. His opinions concerning the Roman Catholics you must, I think, have heard me mention. He declares, that he would not wish to convert them, and would by no means attempt it: that the true policy is to quiet them, (how is this to be effected?) and then to grant them all they desire; when after a time improving, as he says they have been, and drawing, as the better disposed of them are, towards the Church of England, he expects that they will come over to our church in a body, and be an acquisition of immense value. The opinion he entertains concerning them, seems to have been produced by his having accustomed himself so much to read the best of their writers—his turn of habits at the same time, and even his health, favouring a contemplative *quietist* sort of life, so that he is become very much of a *Frère Port Royal.*

I hope Mrs. ——'s health is improved. This winter-like summer cannot suit her. For myself I felt a good deal shattered when I got quietly to East Bourne; but living regularly there for several weeks benefited me greatly. Here we seem likely to enjoy more quiet than almost at any place we were ever at.

With kindest remembrances, my dear Sir,

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD SIDMOUTH.

Near Newport Pagnel, August 26, 1809.

My dear Lord Sidmouth,

I have for some time been meditating a letter to Richmond Park, indeed, ever since I received a mark of your friendly remembrance, which, like every other such mark, gave me real pleasure. Perhaps I should have taken up my pen sooner, were it not that, whenever I have thought of actually setting about to write to you, such a spacious field, and so crowded with objects, and need I say, of no inviting or cheering colour, has presented itself to my mental view, as to deter me from carrying my design into execution: and I have now brought myself to persevere, by saying to myself, that I would not close with topics, the nearer you approach to which, the more dark, and difficult, and deformed they appear. Of your speech, I can tell you truly, that I think it breathes the spirit of true patriotism; and I will frankly confess also, that till I read it, the truths which it states had not made a sufficiently deep impression on my mind. Let this effect be general, and your end both in speaking and printing is answered.

I wish I could be alongside of you for a day or two; in the *tête-à-têtes* such a situation would insure, we might open respectively our whole hearts, and heavy hearts I fear they would be. For myself I must say, never was I so deeply impressed with a persuasion of our country's danger, and therefore never before driven so much by the insecurity of all earthly possessions, to seek for

that surer inheritance, that more substantial happiness, which is represented to us under the figure of a city which hath foundations, thus most forcibly intimating the baseless nature of the fabrics of this perishing world. Our true policy must doubtless be, to adopt that system which, as you justly suggest, our sagacious enemy, as well as ourselves, may clearly see we shall be able to continue, humanly speaking, interminably. This is what your logicians term, if you will allow a Cambridge man ever to talk of logic, *genus generalissimum.* It must be followed into its various ramifications, in order to direct us to the right conclusions, concerning both the nature and amount of our naval and military force, of our financial and military operations.

Do you know, if I were with you again, I should probably, partly by look, partly by word of mouth, have hinted to you, that you might once more come into office. I am not in the secrets of any of the present ministry, but I must say (and surely if I have no judgment in these cases, it is not for want of experience, and that under circumstances peculiarly well calculated to render experience available), I see many reasons why the present government must wish for your aid, and I see no reasons, none, I mean, of a public nature, and only one of any kind at all, why you should not be disposed to bestow it. I say this only, that if you should find yourself at any time balancing opposite considerations, with a view to the decision of the practical question I am alluding to, my opinion, be it worth ever so little, may be cast into the right scale. Unless the other have in it weights of which I know and sus-

pect nothing, or the balance itself be untrue, I cannot doubt but that my scale will preponderate. Whether in place or out of it, my dear Lord S., my best wishes will attend you. Before I say farewell, three words, *de re domesticâ*. I hope you are yourself better than you were in the spring, and that Lady S. and your young ones are all well; with that exception, which I need scarcely say is never out of my mind, when I name or think of your family. I thank God we are all well: after having been for six weeks at East Bourne, we are living in a house which a friend, who tried in vain to hire one for me, has kindly lent me. I am very near the haunts of my prime favourite, Cowper. Once more, my dear Lord S., believe me ever,

With cordial esteem and regard,
Most sincerely yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO Z. MACAULAY, ESQ.

[On the detection and seizure of a slave ship by Mr. Macaulay.]

Near Newport Pagnel, October 19, 1809.

My dear Macaulay,

I am in the state of a full charged bottle of electrical fluid, which wants some conductor to empty itself by. Mrs. W. indeed takes her part in my joy, but I want you, or Stephen, or Babington, or H. Thornton. You really deserve a statue. But more serious and sober matter for rejoicing remains, after the first riotous effervescence has, or rather *shall have*, fumed away, for

this is far from being yet the case with me; and with as much sobriety as I can, I compose myself into a grateful acknowledgment of the goodness of Providence, in blessing your endeavours with success. It may be useful to put down exactly the whole story, from the first faint and distant view you had of the thief with scarcely light sufficient to ascertain his substance and features, till this moment, when he is dragged into open day in all his deformity. I am the more glad on account of the effect likely to be produced on the mind of Perceval and his Secretary.

I trust no further difficulties will occur. I should like to see Stephen's face when he first hears of the seizure. Farewell. With kind regards to Mrs. M.,

I am,

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ.

Near Newport Pagnel, October 24, 1809.

My dear Stephen,

I must add a very few words to my letter of yesterday, and send for your perusal, in confidence, a letter from a naval officer at Flushing. If you think there is any fair ground for the opinion I stated yesterday, do set your active mind (which without compliment is more fertile in resources than any I ever knew, or at least that I recollect,) to work, to consider whether it be still possible for the proposal to coalesce to be made to

Lord Grenville in such a manner as would be likely to produce his consent to it. This of course implies the king's sending to him to state the dangers of the country, and the fatal effects to be apprehended from the probable party struggles which will probably otherwise ensue. You would render Perceval as well as the country the greatest possible service if you could bring this about. Indeed, the former object would be effected more certainly than the latter, because whether a coalition should or should not ensue, he must profit from it greatly. On this head I will not enlarge; only remember, as I hinted in pencil, but I fear illegibly, yesterday, and therefore repeat it to-day, that in order to justify Perceval's acting in any degree after the precedent set him by Pitt in 1784, it would be requisite that he should first have exhausted all other means and endeavours for forming such a government as would not leave the king wholly without those he could trust. It strikes me, though I am open to conviction of my error, that he could by no means truly affirm such to be the case at present.

I am assured the writer of the inclosed is a man of strict veracity and honour. Have you talked with Perceval concerning the expeditions, especially concerning this Walcheren business? I have been most laboriously striving to keep my mind from all prejudication on that subject also, yet I find it hard work, and growing harder and harder daily. Again: — Are you at all satisfied that it has been and even still is right to keep the island? I have been in a state of growing astonishment; the more so because I some time ago intimated to Perceval the

importance of having some authoritative though not official contradiction in the newspapers of the accounts published in the *Morning Chronicle*, one of which represented our poor fellows as suffering grievously from the want of necessary comforts.

By the way, neither to the above, nor to another letter I wrote him about the Danish prisoners of war, has his Secretary or anybody else sent me one single line. I never take any thing ill, but I fear he is affronted at me for some thing or other, and I don't know that I should mention it to you, but 1st, because you can perhaps guess whether this be so or not; 2dly, it may suggest to you the propriety of not using my name in any thing you say to him. He has no idea, and I really grant most fully he has no reason or ground to have any, how much I have wished and do wish him to be minister. But it is utterly impossible he can stand according to the course matters are now taking. When do you return to town? We expect your son James to-day, and I hope to keep him till next week.

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

RIGHT HON. SPENCER PERCEVAL TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Docketted, "Pri. — Perceval about my letter to Mr. Jermant.—Ans. Utterly groundless. I only signed, never read, letter, but afterwards frankly told him wherein uncivilly — perhaps unkindly treated, &c." *]

Downing Street, November 8, 1809.

Dear Wilberforce,

I have received a letter from Mr. George Jermant, desiring me to procure for a young friend of his a commission in the marines. He says in his letter, "I wrote to Mr. Wilberforce, who in a letter from the neighbourhood of Newport Pagnel, just received, says, that circumstances which he will explain when we meet, renders it improper for him to make the application now," with a dash under him and now. I am well aware of your disinclination to make applications to any ministers; I therefore should not have been surprised to have found you had refused making such an application either now or at any time; but I think you will enter into my feelings when I say, that I am by no means easy at finding that there is something at the present moment that makes it improper for you to make the application. I do really believe that if such a feeling had come across you with regard to me, you would have taken the same means, I hope at least you would, of ascertaining whether anything had unintentionally passed from you to me, as I now do of learning whether anything has unintentionally passed (as I can assure you most solemnly must have been the case, if it has passed at all) from

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 410.

me to you, which has given you any offence. Pray let me know, with your usual frankness, if it has, and I trust, I shall be able to satisfy you that your impression has proceeded either from mistake on your part, or inadvertence on mine.

I am, dear Wilberforce,

Yours very truly,

S. PERCEVAL.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. STEPHEN.

Near Newport Pagnel, Sunday, November 18, 1809.

My dear Sister,

I have taken no notice of the part of your former letter, in which you speak of yourself after the old sort. We will confer on those subjects when we meet: meanwhile, be assured that our safety does not vary with our feelings about it. I cannot but think, my dear sister, that you would do well to endeavour to apply to yourself more confidently the promises of the Gospel. Perhaps, I have scarcely said enough to you to enforce this practice. I should have done it more, had I not considered that though you were walking somewhat uncomfortably, yet that you were, I doubted not, walking in the right road, and, therefore, all would soon be well. If even a thousand years are with the Lord as one day, how contemptibly short will the span of human life appear, when it is viewed by those who are enabled to know even as they are known. Yet I own I think this way of going on of yours arises, in a great degree, from

your not enough considering the fulness and freeness of the grace of Christ. I find myself continually apt to lose the just impression our minds ought to retain on this head. We ought always to feel as those who, having been justified through the goodness of God through Christ, are assured that God is reconciled to us if we will but cast ourselves on His mercy, and that He is willing to give us every blessing we can desire. But among these blessings, we ought to remember there are several which may seem likely at the time, at least at first, rather to impair our present comfort than to heighten it. Among these is an increasing tenderness of conscience, an increasing sense of the guilt of sin and of our own sinfulness and weakness. This will, at first, increase our humiliation and contrition, and make it rise at times even to self-abhorrence; but, blessed be God! there are promises in abundance (and I am sure I say blessed be God for them,) to those who are in this very state of mind: "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and will save such as are of a contrite spirit," &c. &c. Even David was instructed to say this (Psalm xxxiv.), but how much more confidently (if we may speak thus, when even David's words were of the Holy Spirit's inspiration) may we assure ourselves of this truth, when we consider the atoning blood of Christ. In this frame and spirit let us cast ourselves at the foot of the Cross, and assure ourselves of the mercy and loving kindness of Him who has declared "Them that come unto me I will in no wise cast out." Who else are "the poor in spirit," "the lambs, whom Christ will carry in His bosom," but those who feel in this very way?

May you be enabled, my dear sister, to know more of the comfort of Christianity, if it be the will of God; especially since I believe it would probably be effected by your having more just views of the doctrines of the Gospel. However, "The time is short," and "there remaineth a rest for the people of God," — a rest not from labour only and turmoil, but from disquietude and sorrow. Meanwhile endeavour to look more to the Saviour for every blessing; and "may you be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man," and be more filled by the God of hope with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. Farewell!

I could willingly keep writing on, but even here, I get so little time to myself, (especially time which I can properly apply to religious offices,) that I must not spend even on you the whole of what I greatly want myself. O, my dear sister, what an unspeakable blessing is it, to be disposed to retire from the crowd, and to acquaint ourselves with God, and be at peace. This is your desire also on this blessed day, and it is, we are authorised to say, "The work of God!" We are even taught and enjoined to regard it in that light. Let us then praise God for the disposition, and be assured that it is only a specimen, and an earnest and pledge of His general inclinations towards us. It is because He loves us, that He has done this for us, and He will do greater things than this. We wrong His loving kindness alike and our own comfort. But I should never have done if I were not to check myself. May we, my dear sister,

I would humbly hope, join in glory, in praising the goodness of our God and Saviour!

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WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD SIDMOUTH.

Kensington Gore, January 2, 1810.

My dear Lord S.,

Multos et felices! — Many thanks for your friendly communication. I have begun your inclosure, but as I reserve it for quiet time, it is not yet finished. Your principle rejoices my heart; and I am persuaded the more our affairs are animated by its spirit, the better they will go on. It is thus that Providence blesses nations in the way of natural consequence.

But what makes me take up the pen at this moment, when I am beyond measure wearied, is my wishing to form an alliance with you, of which the basis is to be, our mutually supporting the children for which we are respectively interested in this election for the deaf and dumb school. There are twenty vacancies. May I beg you to sign some of my cards, and to include the names of my two children (I am interested for them in the order in which they stand), who are both real objects.

Excuse extreme haste; and believe me ever,

My dear lord,

Yours most sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE HON. JOHN JAY.

Kensington Gore, near London, July 10, 1810.

My dear Sir,

Calling to mind the friendly spirit which animates your letters to me, I am not ashamed of being deemed impertinently selfish, when I commence my reply to your last very obliging communication of November, 1809, by telling you that about a year and three quarters ago I changed my residence, and found myself in the habitation which my family now occupies, and which we find more salubrious than Clapham Common. We are just one mile from the turnpike gate at Hyde Park corner, which I think you will not have forgotten yet, having about three acres of pleasure ground around my house, or rather behind it, and several old trees, walnut and mulberry, of thick foliage. I can sit and read under their shade, which I delight in doing with as much admiration of the beauties of nature (remembering at the same time the words of my favourite poet: "Nature is but a name for an effect, whose cause is God,") as if I were two hundred miles from the great city.

My parliamentary duties force me to be within easy reach of London all the winter, and even spring, and sometimes for a part of the summer. I have a very affectionate wife, who is always unwilling to be at a distance from me: and Providence has blest us with six children, the eldest of whom is not quite twelve, the youngest under two years of age. My family are breathing pure air, and taking exercise quietly and without restraint, while I am in the harness at St. Stephen's, or,

to continue the metaphor, in a very good stable just opposite Westminster Hall, where I commonly, or, rather chiefly, take both my food and rest during the whole session,—often being unable to come over to Kensington Gore from Monday morning to Saturday night; — always, however, within call, should domestic matters require my presence. I was not aware that my egotism would be so tedious, yet again let me confess that I am not afraid of subjecting myself, with you, to any severity of censure. When I have a regard for any one, I like to know his habits of life, times, places, &c.; and I recollect with pleasure that you kindly gave me an account of your family matters, and of your present situation and pursuits. Let me beg of you to be so obliging as to continue so to do, in any letter which you may do me the favour to write: next, let me not forget to inform you, that your friendly packet of the 8th of November last, of which I received duplicates first, brought me two copies of your favour of April 14, 1806; for which, however late, accept my best thanks. In conformity with the kind wish you express, that I should name to you some person in London to whom your letters may be addressed, let me name Robert Barclay, Esq. (the great brewer), or Samuel Hoare, Esq. (the banker), both of whom I think you know.

I wish I could recollect, with certainty, how many of the reports of the African Institution I sent you. I will, however, transmit to you either to New York or Philadelphia, accordingly as on inquiry I shall judge best, all the reports but the first. Indeed, on consideration, I will send them all, as you may promote our

common object, by giving away any copies you do not wish to retain.

I am grieved to tell you that both your countrymen and my own are still carrying on the abominable traffic in human flesh, in spite of the abolition laws of their respective countries. I trust that a continuance of the vigorous methods we are using to carry our law into effect, will by degrees force our commercial men to employ their substance in some more innocent commerce. It has given me no little pleasure, to find all your several ministers (both Mr. King, Mr. Monroe, and Mr. Pinckney) warmly disposed to co-operate, so far as they properly could in their peculiar situation; and I am not without hopes of a practical, though not a formal adoption of the only effectual expedient for suppressing the slave trade, that of the armed vessels of both our countries taking the slave ships of the other as well as those of its own. There might be objections, though I own I can see none of sufficient importance to outweigh the countervailing benefits to a regular compact between our two countries for the above purpose; but it will answer the same end, provided we respectively abstain from claiming any of our vessels which may have been captured when engaged in the slave trade. I have received, within a few weeks, the opinion of your attorney-general, in its practical tendency in favour of the system I am wishing to see established.

My dear sir, I know not how I have been able, with the pen in my hand, to abstain so long from expressing the sincere and great pleasure it has given me to find affairs taking a more favourable turn between our two

countries. I can only account for my not breaking out on this topic, on my first sitting down to write to you, by the consideration that when once there is a favourable issue in any case, in which we have been receiving or communicating, from time to time, the tidings of the day, with extreme anxiety and earnestness (the French word *empressement* better expresses what I mean) as, for instance, in the case of the illness of a friend, we become so cool that we perhaps forget to inquire about, or to name at all, the very topic on which, during the state of suspense, we were continually asking for or giving intelligence with such feverish solicitude. Really, the idea of a war between our two countries is perfectly horrible; and I am happy to say, that I think, in this country, this most just sentiment gains ground. Like all propositions which are founded in truth and reason, it gradually sinks into the minds of men, and, though perhaps slowly and insensibly, by degrees it leavens nearly the whole mass. It will tend to produce this friendly disposition on your side of the water, if more of your countrymen would come over and live awhile among us. We are an idle people; we are a busy people, and may not have leisure or disposition to pay all the personal attentions which politeness might prescribe; but I am persuaded that any gentleman of character and moderation, who should visit this country, would meet with such a friendly reception as would show him that the circumstances of our being the descendants of common progenitors is not forgotten, or rather, that it is reviving and diffusing itself with increasing force.

Before I conclude, let me express the satisfaction it gave me to find that you were safely laid up, if I may so express it, in a comfortable and tranquil harbour, after having, figuratively as well as literally, been so long, or at least so often, tossed on the sea of public life. May I confess to you, at very near fifty-one only in years, but with only a weak constitution, and after having been in parliament very near thirty years, that I begin to look forward to the same secession from public life; meaning, however, to form no positive determination for the future, but to follow the leadings of Providence, and do on the day the duties of the day.

In three or four years, my four boys, the eldest especially, will be attaining that period of life when a father's eye and tongue may be most useful and necessary to their future well doing; and really the business of parliament has increased so much of late years, as to render it next to impossible for any man who cannot live for six or seven months, in every year, with a very small proportion of food or sleep, especially the latter, to attend at all, as he would otherwise be glad to do, to domestic or social claims. Then let me add, — and if you take it as intended in the way of a hint to yourself, excuse only my freedom in giving it, and you will not greatly mistake my meaning: any man, who has acted his part at all creditably on the stage of public life, may render very great service to mankind, especially to his own countrymen, with whose opinions, prejudices, and errors he is well acquainted, by his pen; for instance, by bearing testimony to the truth of the position, which,

however trite, it is still useful, now and then, to repeat and enforce, that "honesty is the best policy," &c.

I happen to have just now many claims of an epistolary nature, which have been too long neglected, owing to my having left them, as in your case, to be attended to when the recess of parliament should afford me a little more leisure. Much writing also affects my breathing. I must therefore conclude. But before I lay down my pen, let me, recollecting your kindly opening your mind to me on one important occasion, in I think 1795 (or 1796), beg that when you next write to me, you would favour me by telling me how you would vote, &c., if you were in our House of Commons on the question of parliamentary reform. I do not ask you to take the trouble of entering into a detailed statement of the premises which may lead you to form your judgment on that point, whatever it may be; I wish only (unless you have a little leisure) for your conclusion. I will own to you, that one main motive with me for having supported, on a late occasion, the motion for parliamentary reform, was the persuasion that by taking away what must be confessed to be a blemish or blot, in an assembly which is professedly formed on the principle of representation, we are lessening the power of bad men to misrepresent and defame our constitution, and to mislead the well-intentioned, but perhaps less acute and long-sighted, into a concurrence in their measures. Secondly, if the measure should be adopted at all, it is desirable that it should be so at a time when, as it is really the case now, notwithstanding the confident assurance of such men as Cobbett and his adherents, the country feels coolly on

the subject, and is therefore not likely to push its representatives to go dangerous lengths; for I think you will agree with me that it is a species of reform, all things considered, concerning which, in this country and at this time, it is better of the two not to go quite far enough than to go too far.

Farewell, my dear sir, and believe me, with cordial esteem and regard,

Your faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P.S. As I shall be sending you a parcel, and I do not recollect that I ever begged your acceptance of a religious publication, which I first sent into the world the year I married (and what I say of wedded life, I thank Heaven I should not now alter), let me now transmit it as a testimony of my esteem and regard. It was, in truth, principally intended for the use of my friends; I therefore may send it to you with great propriety. I will also accompany it with another on the slave trade. May these books preserve in your family the memorial of our friendly connexion; and, if you will not call me impertinent, I will request from you some similar memorial.

REV. SAM. MARSDEN TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Parramatta, July 27, 1810.

Honoured Sir,

I wrote to you by my friend Mr. Campbell, which letters I hope you will duly receive. They would

explain to you in what situation I stood with the governor. My refusal to act with persons whom the governor has appointed magistrates, gave great offence; my own conscience tells me I did right; and I have not repented, though perhaps I may feel the effects of my refusal in one way or other, while the governor remains in the colony. It is not consistent with morality, religion, or sound policy, to nominate men magistrates, who have been convicts, and who are still living openly in profligacy. What the governor's motive can be I cannot conceive. He issues public orders in favour of morality, while he appoints men magistrates whose general conduct and example militate as much as possible against it. In the worst of times in this colony we never had any man put in the situation of magistrate, who had been a convict. I know the day will come when a change must be made. I still repeat, what I have always said, that the expenses of this country to the mother country will be in proportion to the morals of the inhabitants. The expences of the colony at the present are greater than at any former period, and are likely to be so. I have no doubt that the governor is anxious to do what appears to him to be best; but he will find, that the happiness and prosperity of this country depend very much upon the selection of proper men as magistrates to aid him. They should be men of character and property; acquainted with the local situation of the inhabitants. From these alone the governor can expect honest assistance.

After proper magistrates are appointed, the next object for the governor's attention, is agriculture. This

above all things should be attended to; no country perhaps upon earth is more favourable for agricultnre than this. We are situated at a great distance from all other countries, and ought to maintain ourselves from the produce of the field; but this cannot be done unless agriculture is attended to as it should be. At present I apprehend we shall have to depend much upon India for bread; which ought not to be the case in a country that is capable of producing the greatest abundance. This colony in my opinion will never rise to a state of independence, unless a civil governor is sent out. A naval gentleman is partial to a ship; a military one, to a grand barrack or parade; while neither have any relish for the labour and produce of the field; for this reason they are not proper for the government of a country which is to depend upon agriculture. I think the expenses of the colony will awaken his Majesty's ministers to think something about it. About three thousand five hundred persons are now victualled from his Majesty's stores; which cannot amount to a much less sum than 70,000*l. per annum.* I never saw a greater prospect of expenses to the nation than at present.

I am happy, however, to inform you, that through your kind interest in England, the rising generation are now likely to be taken care of; we have got three good schools now established, one at each principal settlement for the education of the children, and I am now forming more. In a short time, I hope to see a school in every district, and most of the schools are taught by pious men. A very great change has already taken place in the minds of the inhabitants with respect to their chil-

dren. All seem anxious now to have them instructed. Roman Catholics, Jews, and persons of all persuasions, send their children to the public schools, where they are all instructed in the principles of our established religion. I think God will bless the poor children of the exiles to this country, and from them will raise up a seed to serve him. The governor is very ready to meet my wishes relative to the schools, and the instruction of the children. I feel much obliged to him for his kindness in this respect. I believe Lord Castlereagh had impressed this object very strongly upon the governor's mind, in consequence of the kind part you took on the behalf of the poor children.* The blessings that must necessarily follow to this infant country, from the instruction of the rising generation cannot be estimated. They are already very great. Many hundred children were running about the streets growing up in idleness and vice, when I left the colony, who are now diligently employed in mental and moral improvement. This is a great happiness to my mind. I view the children with great delight, and am thankful to God that I came to England and accomplished the object of my voyage; my two colleagues also are men of sound piety, and I trust we shall always have one object in view, and shall see the fruit of our labours.

I feel happy that I have nothing to do with politics. Had the governor appointed men of character as magistrates, and wished me to have acted as one, I should have felt it my duty not to have refused;

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 240. & 401.

but as his excellency thought proper to nominate men, with whom I would on no consideration act in a public capacity, I had an opportunity of freeing myself from a very unpleasant duty, and gained leisure to attend to what more immediately concerned me. All things are wisely ordered for our good; there is not a single event in our lives for which we can assign all the reasons which Infinite Wisdom may have in view. I, more than most men, have cause to be thankful for many striking interpositions of Divine Providence in my favour. At this time my family are all well — God has blessed me in my basket and my store — and has given me all things richly to enjoy. I trust I shall see that I have not laboured in vain, and that in the great day of account, some even from this foreign land will be found meet for the kingdom of Heaven. Difficulties I must still expect more or less; but I find now that it is not a little thing that will affect me. Should you see Mrs. Henry Thornton, I beg you will present my respectful compliments, and also to Mrs. Wilberforce.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

SAMUEL MARSDEN.

JOHN BOWDLER, JUN. ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Widley, near Portsmouth, October 15, 1810.

My dear Sir,

I can write but a very few lines, for I have fatigued myself with writing the enclosed. I am greatly concerned for poor ——: to fix the mind with a strong interest on anything is to cure the complaint. I suspect his mind is at present more likely to be attracted by speculative pursuits than by any external objects. It is a part of the complaint. The mind is not at ease enough to observe. I remember once, when a circumstance had happened that greatly agitated me, standing at the end of a moderately sized room, without hearing (to the best of my belief) a single note of a piece of vocal music that was performing at the other end, though there were two instruments and three voices. I mention this, because at first, travelling abroad occurred to me as likely to help, but on recollection, I much doubt if he would find benefit, unless, indeed, there was inconvenience enough to rouse him. If he could lose his servant, and get into difficulties, he would find himself wonderfully better; yet, poor fellow, his are real sorrows, though thoughtless people are apt to laugh at them; and sorrows which I am persuaded would be changed with advantage for the greatest bodily hardships.

Indeed I owe you a great deal for all your kindness and affection. Believe that I feel it deeply, and that will excuse my not expressing my feelings more largely. I hope you got a letter I wrote you just before leaving

Hayes, else you must think me negligent indeed. I have got both yours, enclosing a note from Mr. Gisborne and a letter to Lord Valentia. Mr. G.'s note is truly kind, in the best of all styles, Christian kindness. Pray express to him how much I feel obliged by his friendly remembrance at such a moment; indeed, I may perhaps say so myself, if I have time, — but probably not.

I have so much wished to be introduced to Commissioner Grey that I deliberated about asking my aunt to take me into Portsmouth on purpose, but my inability to talk, and almost to speak, without injury, has deterred me.

There are very few things that have given me greater pain than ——'s not calling on you last spring; however, I must say in his excuse, he was greatly pressed by business, having come there only to transact an executorship concern; and like all country gentlemen he has the art of filling his hands and time completely for six weeks with what you would dispatch in the same time at half an hour a-day. Give my kindest remembrances to Mrs. W., and believe me

Very affectionately yours,

J. Bowdler.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE REV. JOHN VENN.

My dear Sir,

We are here in full force, and I should be ashamed of pouring into a friend's house thus *en masse*, if I were not really conscious that I should like to receive, as well

as to pay, such a visit: for instance, it would give me real pleasure to receive under my roof yourself, and sister, and all your descendants. The present age... though I must confess it has improved in that part of *savoir vivre* which respects the treatment of inmates, for nothing could be so annoying as the old-fashioned doing of the honours of the house to your guests, *ab ovo usque ad poma*, that is, from the waiting breakfast for them in the morning, to the lighting of them up into their bedrooms at night... yet it is a far less hospitable age than the last. The very construction of our houses is a proof of it; and it is but a bad change that has been made of all the queer little in and out closets (which would hold, however, a bed each,) of our forefathers, for the splendid drawing rooms of our own times.

But I must break off, though I could gladly go on chatting; and I should have much to say of young Mr. S. who is staying here. How delightful it is to see persons thus setting themselves in early life to obtain eternal glory. S. seems a man of talents, as well as of elegant and pleasing manners, and of a glowing spirit. He is disposed, *entre nous*, to go anywhere as a missionary; but really considering how little, to use Soame Jenyns's antithesis, "how little this Christian nation is indeed a nation of Christians"... which some future Bentley will restore to the genuine reading, by suggesting that it was originally "how little this Christian nation is a nation of Christians indeed," i. e. of *re verâ* Christians... considering this, I say, I greatly doubt whether such a young man might not probably be more useful in his own country than in any other. Do give

me your opinion. To be sure it is much, and it is rare, to find the real *vivida vis animi*, which renders a man decided to go anywhere to preach the glad tidings of salvation through a Redeemer, and at the same time, to preach a plain practical doctrine of the true apostolic standard. Farewell, my dear sir, and believe me ever most affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE RIGHT HON. JOHN SMYTH.

Hertsmonceux, near Battel, November 6, 1810.

My dear Smyth,

Though I were to abstain from taking up my pen, you would give me credit, I trust, for thinking of you and sympathising with you on the late afflicting event, which the newspapers notified to me, but to which I feared but too much credit was due, remembering the apprehensions you had expressed in the summer. But though, as I have already said, you would make sure of my sympathy were I to remain silent, it affords a sort of melancholy pleasure both to give and to receive the assurances of our taking a friendly interest in the sorrows of those we love; and it is partly to send you this assurance that I now write to you. From the strain of your last highly interesting letter, the melancholy close of your long course of anxiety would find you, I trust, in a state to profit from it — I say to profit — for it is an opinion formed after much observation, that we are either the better or the worse for all such visitations —

they scarcely ever leave us where they find us. I have known several instances in which they have been the means of a permanent change for the better in the character; and as we are expressly told in the Scriptures that the dispensations of the Almighty are designed with the gracious purpose of improving our moral condition, we ought, on all such occasions, to make it our deliberate care and earnest endeavour, that the intentions of Heaven, if I may so express myself, are not disappointed, but that they may produce the intended effects.

People who have any sense of religion at all, appear for the most part to bear this class of afflictive visitations with more resignation than might be expected. I think this arises in part from their being such as come manifestly from above; — not like the misfortunes which we can trace to the injustice or ingratitude of men; — they are such also as we cannot resist or control. We cannot help ourselves, if I may so express it. But here they commonly stop; forgetting that by such strokes, they are called upon not only to suffer but to do. Here, as in almost every other instance, the error, and consequently the fault, arises chiefly from their ignorance of the Word of God. O how extensively applicable will be found at the last day this crime of neglecting the Scriptures, even by those who acknowledge their authenticity and authority! But I must check the disposition I feel to pursue this train of thought much farther. Yet let me resume it for a few minutes. The improvement to be derived from such domestic losses is no way difficult to discover; but here, as in other cases,

where we are ignorant of our being diseased, we do not apply for the remedy, though were we to apply, an infallible remedy is at hand. People too often think they only need improvement, when in reality they want a radical reform, (a phrase which I like as much in a religious, as I abhor it in a political sense); they require the completion of that great change of which our Saviour and His apostles speak so often and so forcibly, under the expressions of putting off the old and putting on the new man — of becoming a new creature, &c. &c. In such afflictive dispensations as that which you have lately experienced, we are called upon "to consider our ways," to examine "whether we are in the faith," to ascertain whether we are prepared for that future state, for which it is the great object of Christianity to fit us.

I wish you would read carefully and consider what must be the real meaning of that striking part of our Saviour's address to the Church of Laodicea, in the third chapter of the Revelations, "Behold I stand at the door and knock," &c. Then whether we have all our work to begin, or whether we have begun and have to carry it on farther, or like the Laodiceans have to recover from a state of declension, the process is the same; and I know nowhere that it is so well described as in my favourite volume Doddridge's Rise and Progress. We must pray more earnestly; we must read the Scriptures more diligently, those parts of them especially which more peculiarly suit our case, we must endeavour by meditation and prayer to strengthen our impression of invisible things, and to obtain a larger measure of that

Holy Spirit which is promised to all who earnestly seek it with penitence and faith. Of course I consider as combined with all this, constant self-examination, and watchfulness over our hearts and lives, that not our conduct only, but our thoughts and affections may be such as will be well pleasing to God. It is in this way, my dear friend, that the character is to be formed which is spoken of in Holy Scripture in the exalted terms of "being made meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light;" and it is, indeed, a blessed consideration, that in this case only, if we do strive in earnest we cannot but succeed. As sure as the Almighty is a God of truth, so sure we may be, that He will give His Holy Spirit to them that ask him. There is scarcely anything more remarkable than the difficulty with which we give credit to these declarations of the divine mercy; and though this may sometimes proceed from humility, as it would almost always excuse itself under that guise, it is more commonly the result of unbelief. I know nothing which has ever impressed on my mind more powerfully the infinite condescension of God, than that for the purpose of providing against this diffidence of ours, (for the Scriptures throughout discover a thorough acquaintance with our natural character,) He has even vouchsafed to confirm this often-repeated declaration by an oath, — I think, in the 6th chap. of Hebrews, but have not time to look. Of the argument, however, and intention, I am sure, for it is a source of deep consolation to my own mind; as it is said, "That they might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to the hope set before us."

My dear friend, I am persuaded I need not apologise to you for thus pouring out of the fulness of a heart which is deeply interested for your happiness, and which, to its earnest wishes, joins its cordial prayers, that you may partake largely of all those never-ending blessings which are prepared for such as seek them in the way which the word of God points out. I was going to lay down the pen, but one thought more occurs to me, which I should be sorry to omit: I was looking the other day into the preface of a publication of Mr. Fellowes, and to my wonder I saw that he recommended it to people to confine their reading chiefly to the Gospels and to neglect the Epistles, more especially those of St. Paul. If he had said just the contrary, he would have done very wrong, but really I should have thought him far more reasonable, considering that St. Paul was commissioned by our Saviour Himself to preach the Gospel, and to enlighten, &c., the Gentiles: — "Unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes," &c., (Acts xxvi.): — Paul's Speech before Festus and Agrippa. Do look at the passage. Now how astonishing, that any one professing to believe this to be the word of God, should yet say that St. Paul is the very teacher to whom we ought not to listen! Farewell, my dear friend! May every blessing attend you and yours here and hereafter! — so heartily exclaims

Your faithful friend,

W. Wilberforce.

I am going to London (Kensington Gore) in two or three days. Kind remembrances to your daughter. I

hope your eldest son and his lady are well. I fear I am scarcely legible. It is owing to my being conscious that, if my hand did not gallop it could not get to its journey's end. Here they come for my letters: — well saved.

JOHN BOWDLER, JUN. ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Florian, Valetta, January 5, 1811.

My dear Sir,

I am quite vexed at not having written to you before; it looks so much as if distance could make me think less of you, which, believe me, it never will; but I have been poorly of late, and writing was a fatigue to me, and, to say the truth, I am but poorly now. I meant to have written to you by the last conveyance, but found it impracticable. We have now left England near ten weeks, and have not received a single line from that country, and though we look daily for a packet, no packet arrives. To add to our anxiety we have heard of the king's illness, and the first debate respecting it, which, however, I have not yet been able to read, for newspapers here are great rarities. In the mean time we live on very quietly in this pretty pavilion, where General Oakes has been so kind as to lodge us, and I hope I have derived considerable benefit from the climate. In many respects I am sensible of considerable improvement, as strength, looks, &c.; but I feel rather a hope than a conviction that the amendment is radical. I can-

not say with any confidence that the lungs are returning to a state of soundness, and feel very great doubts indeed whether the next five months will work a cure. These things, however, are in the hands of Him who will do all things well. I wish you would send little S—— or H—— here in a balloon; they would like the voyage exceedingly, and would be invaluable; and as this has been declared a free port, no duty would be payable upon them, and I will engage to get any price you choose to set them at, only asking for my commission full liberty to play and talk nonsense with them till sold. In truth, our life here is not very brilliant, though my uncle is very kind to me, and the chess-board assists; but having thought it prudent to decline all dinner engagements, except at the palace, for the sake of avoiding night air, our evenings are rather long.

This island is not very rich in materials for observation, and if it were, I am not in a state of health well suited for observing. You will be glad, however, to hear that although the government of the British is of a nature the most imperfectly defined, and the benefit of English law (*sutor ad crepidam!*) has never yet been communicated to the Maltese, both which circumstances have considerably diminished the advantages which it might have been hoped this island would have reaped from coming under our authority, the inhabitants are highly pleased with their new masters, and industry and happiness have greatly increased since our arrival. The history of the unsettled nature of our government is this: — the French claimed by right of conquest, and we conquered the island from the French, so before the

peace of Amiens, all was pretty clear, for the old grand masters were absolute, (in the same sense, however, I apprehend, as many other European potentates, *salvis consuetudinibus*, absolute as to new matters,) and George III. occupied the place of his predecessors. But you will recollect the arrangements and difficulties which took place respecting this island at the treaty of Amiens, and how a noble viscount, after a great deal of *pro* and *con* about the business, refused to deliver up the place, and declared war. Since that time we have of course continued here; but as the island was by the stipulations of the treaty of Amiens to have been replaced in the possession of the grand master, we seem to think it right to hold ourselves in readiness so to do whenever the proper time shall arrive. No arrangements, therefore, have ever been made for settling the government permanently, or defining its authority, and the legitimate modes of exercising it. The governor for the time being is obliged to act according to his best discretion in every case that occurs, which makes his office, in many respects, exceedingly anxious and painful. The truth is, that Malta is now our own; the treachery and unworthiness of the order, the right of conquest, and the necessity of things have made it so. We are beloved by the people, who hate the French and the Knights of St. John equally, and with equal reason; the order itself has ceased to exist, in a political sense; their estates are confiscated, their consequence lost, and their numbers dwindled to nothing; nor have they any legitimate head recognised by the body. We may then very reasonably say, that the arrangements of the treaty of Amiens are

impracticable, and consider Malta as part of the British empire, which would make it our duty to give the inhabitants a government properly defined, and a participation in British laws.

The island is exceedingly populous and fertile. Its size is the same with the Isle of Wight, but it contains more than three times the number of inhabitants. The people are a cheerful, industrious, well-disposed race, who have improved, and are improving. They are, I fear, very ignorant and superstitious, but the Bible Society has already circulated some testaments here, and it was with great satisfaction that I heard the Proto-Medico of the island, a man of some learning and enlargement, say, that he had lately perused St. Paul's epistles to the Corinthians, and was exceedingly struck with their contents. You remember, too, what Mr. Terrott (who is spoken of here with great respect) mentioned. I have only very lately been able to procure an introduction to Dr. Naudi, and the want of strength and voice have really made it very difficult to push my enquiries on this subject as far as I could wish, but I will endeavour to learn more, and if I can get any important intelligence, will not suffer it to be lost. Dr. Naudi is an exceedingly simple man in his exterior and manners. He is a professor of chemistry at the college, and we hope to see more of him, for both my uncle and I thought him very pleasing.

I must conclude, for time presses. Do not forget me, for you will never be forgotten by me. I beg my affectionate regards to Mrs. Wilberforce; and every thing that is kind to the H. Thorntons, Babingtons,

&c. &c. If you should see Lord Sidmouth, pray remember me to him with great regard. He was very kind to me in my illness. I do not think that we shall stay here long after the end of this month, but know not where we shall go, and letters had better be directed as usual — to me, to the care of Messrs. Edward Hayes and Co. Palermo or Zante I think likely to be the next resting place. There and every where I shall remain,

Your grateful and ever affectionate friend,

J. Bowdler, Jun.

I hope you will write to me.

I have seen a good deal of Lord Valentia, who has been staying here. He is agreeable, and has been very civil to me. You will think it odd when I add that I have not delivered your letter to him. It would take some time to explain why; but I have not the least doubt you would think me right.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO RALPH CREYKE, ESQ.

Near London, January 9, 1811.

My dear Sir,

Let me be ever so much hurried, it is always gratifying to me to see the handwriting of an old friend, and I return you thanks for not indulging your idleness, as people sometimes do, under the pretence of saving my time. You will, I know, suggest to yourself an excuse for me, if I return you a short and hurried reply: and

you see that, knowing my own proneness to garrulity when engaged in a friendly *tête-à-tête*, I have taken against it the precaution of a small sheet of paper, being resolved not to encroach on a second.

Your last letter really solaced me. It is a frequent subject of complaint with me in private, and I have even been allowed to vent my complaint in St. Stephen's without being coughed down for my pains, that one very general fault in persons of the present day is, that they are too faintly impressed with a sense of the unequalled exemptions, blessings, and comforts which we enjoy in this happy country. Take us all in all, and we may boldly pronounce that never was any country in a state at all to compare with us; and, what is more, never were we ourselves in so enjoyable a state as we are at present, and not only in so enjoyable but in so improved and improving a state. Still, as often happens in the human body, so likewise in political communities a state of the highest health may be adjacent, if I may so term it, to a state of sickness. I have not time to trace into detail the proposition I have just stated, but I almost think you can do it for me.

I am, however, on the 4th page of my *sheetling*, so I must be preparing for taking my leave. But before I say farewell, let me say a word or two *de re politicâ*; and first express the joy I feel from the amending state of the King's health: I really trust it will please God to restore him once more to the enjoyment of his faculties, and still to continue his reign for many years. I own, however, I am more afraid of the moral than of the political evils to be apprehended from

a change; and it is my firm persuasion that we owe obligations, greater than can almost be estimated, to his Majesty, for sustaining the general standard of morals at its present point of elevation. (I must give you another sheetling). The simple resolution of not receiving at court any ladies of quality who have disgraced themselves, has been of more practical efficacy than those would conceive who have not turned their minds to this subject. With these feelings towards his Majesty (indeed their Majesties), you may be sure it went hard with me to vote, as I did, with the majority on the question concerning the household *; but it would be wrong to sacrifice so great a constitutional point to his Majesty's feelings in an instance in which we were probably setting a precedent for all future times,

Let me not forget to tell you that I find from C. Long, what I must have known at the time, but must have forgot, that in 1788, the arrangement about the household appeared to Mr. Pitt so objectionable in principle, that it was not without the greatest difficulty, and after trying in vain to make such a separation of the offices of the household as our resolution describes, that at last he consented to give it all to the Queen. I remember Lord North's speech against that measure was by much the best objection that was made against the whole plan—and it would have been the more unconstitutional to suffer the whole household to remain under the influence of the then opposition, because of our having debarred the Prince Regent from making peers. But I must break off. Indeed, for the last page or two, a friend has been talking

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 491, 492.

to me. I shall be glad to shake you by the hand in the spring. Give my kind remembrances to all your fireside, and believe me,

My dear Sir,

Ever most sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. Mrs. W. joins in kind remembrances to you and the ladies.

JEREMY BENTHAM, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Queen's Square Place, Westminster, February 1, 1811.

Dear Sir,

Having lost the hopes with which I had been led to flatter myself, — that I may not have to reproach myself with being ultimately wanting either to the public or to myself, — I find myself reduced thus to attempt troubling you, under much disadvantage, with the mention of a favour which, subject to your approbation, I had, since my last, settled with myself to request at your hands.

You had been already apprised, I believe, of my having received a letter from the Treasury. It came to me dated on the 4th instant. To a part, the answer to which did not seem to me to admit of any further postponement, I sent an answer on the 18th. The other part I was led to defer answering by the above-mentioned lost hope.

As to the views with which the letter was written,

—though, or rather because, it contains a question about undertaking on a reduced scale, — if I were obliged to lay a wager on the subject, I should lay about ten to one that a determination had been taken not to set the business on foot upon any scale; and that the letter is but one step in a plan for my ruin, in which more steps than one had been taken already; but, not holding myself justified in acting upon probabilities as if they were certainties, I planned, on my part, as above, for the purpose of reducing them to certainties, the *experimentum crucis*, which I now proceed to state.

Sir Evan Nepean, you will presently recollect, has from first to last been fully possessed of the whole business. Of the height occupied by that truly right honourable man, in public estimation, it were needless to say more. To the present administration, if what I heard some time ago, and from satisfactory authority, be at present true, viz., that his votes in the House have been habitually on their side, the choice of such a person for referee should, naturally speaking, if they mean what they would be thought to mean, be in a particular degree acceptable. Many years ago, when Panopticon was still, in appearance at least, depending, he informed me of a spontaneous offer he was then about to make to Mr. Pitt, to take upon himself, in, as well as out of the House, the whole responsibility of setting it on foot, if such were Mr. Pitt's pleasure. As towards me, who am less than nobody, and who, except for a moment in the street (I think it was last spring), have not had any sort of intercourse with Sir Evan, direct or indirect, for I know not how many years, —whether any thing of

undue partiality can be supposed to exist on his part, especially in opposition to the leanings of men in their station, with whom he is in the sort of connection above spoken of, and with all of whom he cannot but be more or less in personal habits of intercourse, is a question upon which I am ashamed to observe how many words I have consumed.

What occurred to me then in relation to him was that, some day or other, when in the House, you might, perhaps, have no objection to the mentioning him to Mr. Perceval in the above view. I mean proposing, as from yourself, or in what other manner might seem most proper, the referring the whole matter to Sir Evan, for him to settle with me, as above. Which to speak to first, him or Mr. Perceval, that would be another point for you to determine.

As to any body else, a Secretary of the Treasury, for instance, who, at this time of day, should take up the business *de novo* . . . having it in charge to deal with the sort of troublesome man which it has been my fate to be converted into . . . a person in every such situation would, if sincere, find in real ignorance a perpetual source of embarrassment, or, if insincere, in affected ignorance, a perpetual cloak for injustice. For settling the terms of the contract, (that is to say, for gaining time, for they were afterwards to be settled again, as if nothing had been settled,) Mr. Long, then Secretary to the Treasury, turned me down to Mr., afterwards Sir Richard Good, then not in any office, unless it were that of police magistrate, or justice of the peace.

On the part of the administration, should this proposal

be declined, my intended fate with them will be no longer a secret to me. I shall then have to carry on against Mr. Perceval the same sort of cause that Sir Thomas More, according to his own report of the case, had to carry on against Henry VIII. In defence of my own character, I shall find myself under the miserable necessity of exposing divers others, though, unhappily, with not much greater prospect of advantage to the public from any such exposure, than from a similar exposure at the expense of Buonaparte.

Ever since I received yours of the 23d, I have been confined to the house by indisposition, which has been one cause of my not endeavouring to profit by a hint, which I am not quite sure of my having rightly understood, about Kensington Gore; but I think of recommencing my usual early walks to-morrow.

Entreating your indulgence for the liberty I have thus been taking,

I remain,
Dear Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
JEREMY BENTHAM.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

London, March 12, 1811.

My dear Muncaster,

How strange it is that the very letter from you which I have suffered, I fear, to lie in my writing-box unanswered for two or three weeks, should be one

which was the effusion of your warmest feelings, and which produced kindred emotions in my heart, just as if it had been so little interesting as to have escaped my recollection altogether; but the truth is, that my delaying to write to you has arisen from the precisely opposite cause; for really the state of mind in which I felt myself was so uncongenial with inclosure bills and turnpike-roads-renewal acts, that I could not proceed without violence to my feelings in the midst of all the hurly burly of my Palace Yard life.' Some time has now passed away, and how wonderfully does time deaden the sensibility of our emotions! Few things have struck me more, than that those who filled the largest space in the eyes of men appear to be very soon forgotten.

But, my dear Muncaster, I must not forget to notice one sentiment in your letter: you say you have long ceased to be concerned for those who are taken away; that you rather, on the contrary, envy their lot, &c. Now, without applying your words to any particular person, much less to our lately deceased friend, of whom I assure you I thought far more favourably than of people in general, we ought to remember, my dear Muncaster, both for ourselves and for others, that to die, to quit this perishing world, and enter on a state of never-changing existence — of existence, too, either exquisitely happy, or exquisitely miserable — is, indeed, an awful event: as, also, that there must be a certain preparation of heart and character before any one can be admitted into the state of bliss; therefore, unless this character really seems to be formed, it is surely the kindest thing we can do to urge those whom we love to apply in earnest

to that work, to which none who apply in earnest will apply in vain. On these grounds, I have often blamed myself for not asking you what religious books you had prevailed on an old friend of ours to read, or have read to him. . . .

But, my dear Muncaster, I have been running on strangely; you like, however, I know, that I should

> ——— " pour forth all my soul as plain
> As downright Shippen or as old Montaigne;"

and therefore I shall not apologise; but I will now lay down my pen, first asking when you think of coming up to London again. You will forget the way to the House of Commons. How are your daughters going on? Did you know that I had lost a most active and steady friend at Leeds, Mr. Cookson, a man of most extraordinary powers. Nothing could be more honourable than the whole of his conduct towards me; nothing more disinterested.

I thank God we are all pretty well, though Mrs. W. has had a bad cold; they have been almost general hereabouts. Farewell, my dear Muncaster, and believe me,

Ever most sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

July 26, 1811.

My dear Wilberforce,

The question* you speak of is one I have thought and shall think very much about; but the reasons on both sides are painfully important, and such as do not well admit of being fairly poised against each other. As to the intellectual decay, I am disposed to say that it is not real; I never heard you speak better than the last time, pitch of voice excepted; and I think you are better and better *heard* there, in the parliamentary sense of the word. Your great defect always has been want of preparation in cases that demand, and, — with those who do not know your habits, — raise the expectation of it. No man does so little justice to his own powers. That you stand so high as you do, is because you could stand much higher if you would, *i. e.* if you could and would take time to arrange your matter. At the same time I do think your faculties, in one respect, are the worse for wear; I mean your memory. I perceive it to decline even as fast as my own, and that is a bold word. Yet were I continually hurried as you are, I could remember nothing and do nothing.

We are, however, to recollect that the question is not merely what you are, but what you are likely to continue to be for some years; and in this view I am by no means clear that the rule *solve senescentem* is not applicable in the case supposed. I lament, my dear Wilberforce, to

* Mr. Wilberforce's standing again for Yorkshire.

say, that of late I have at times seen or conceived I saw symptoms of deterioration in your bodily appearance, as if you were getting old faster than I could wish, or rather losing the promise of long abiding strength; but in this one is apt to deceive one's self, and be the dupe of one's own apprehensions. Your spirits, too, I have thought not uniformly so high and so long on the wing as they used to be.

If I could persuade you to think as I and others do respecting the duties of parliamentary life, I should have much less difficulty on this question. If you could be content with a very limited attendance, coming down only on special or important occasions, and leaving the ordinary business of the house to younger and stronger men, you might do much good there without hurting yourself, or neglecting your private duties. I can by no means admit that it is every man's duty to attend every sitting of the house, and that a man has no right to accept a seat unless he is to take part in every deliberation, or vote on every question. You yourself make exceptions for lawyers and men in public offices which call them elsewhere, and why not for men who are infirm, or who have private duties, or important public labours of a voluntary and gratuitous kind which demand their time at their desks or elsewhere out of the house? If you were digesting information, preparing papers, concerting measures, &c. for the promotion of great public objects out of the house, how directly might it minister to your usefulness when in it. But if very frequent non-attendance were to be the result of private occupations alone, what then? Is a representative

unfaithful, or does he serve his country ill because he does not give all his time to political labours during the enormous portion of the year now occupied by a session? Then let celibacy be a qualification for parliament as well as for the popish priesthood. A man has no right to be a husband and a father unless he will give to those relations an adequate portion of his time. A professional man perhaps does not; but then he is labouring for his family's support and welfare. Surely a man has at least a right to consider whether it is better for his country that he should give to it a half or quarter portion of parliamentary attendance, or quit parliament altogether. Now I believe no man but yourself will doubt that it would be better for the country to have the smallest portion of your time in the house than to take in your stead one of our ordinary representatives, or such a one as would be likely to fill the seat which you relinquish or decline. For my part, I even fancy you coming down like the great Chatham, or some other veteran on great occasions, exciting an interest even by the rarity of your presence, much more by your opinion delivered with all the aid of preparation, and perhaps doing more good in that way than you have ever yet done. Three fourths of our debates are on questions hardly fit for you, and not worthy of your time. They are such as embarrass you on the middle ground you occupy, and make it difficult for you to act without a real or apparent inconsistency. Whenever a vote requires, in the eye of the public, explanations and distinction from you, it had better not be given at all, for your explanations and distinctions will generally be

misunderstood or misrepresented. It has often been my clear opinion, and as often when we voted together as the reverse, that absence would have been a happy resort for you, and that it was a pity you voted at all. You have a peculiar sort of character to support, and therefore when I thought you right I have felt thus, — there are many things right and necessary to be done which had better be done by inferior instruments, and in the absence of, or without, the participation of those to whom one ascribes peculiar delicacy, or who command superior respect, just as when the floors and stairs are washing, one would wish the ladies and gentlemen to go out or keep up stairs. But I must refrain from particular illustrations.

All this might imply that you must decline the county; and why not on that express ground, viz., that your many private and extra-parliamentary avocations and state of health would oblige you, if you continued in parliament, to be less close and punctual in attendance than the business of such a county requires. Here a new plan of conduct might be publicly and decorously pointed out. Whoever returned you would have notice of it, and could not complain; and if you afterwards did for the county at large all that you could not do in parliament consistently with other duties, where would be the fault? For my part, I repeat that I firmly believe you would have more weight in the house, and do more good there, if you only came when there was *dignus vindice nodus.* As to knowledge of the business depending there, you seem to think that a man can never hear too much, or read or talk too much on any subject, be-

fore he votes on it; but for my part I hold that a man goes as often wrong from too much as from too little discussion. Besides, the newspapers, bad as they are, give general ideas enough to enable a man who will take time in his library to make up a sound opinion on most questions before their ultimate decision. I am clear you would be oftener right if you consulted only your own judgment and your books, and not what is said by others, either in or out of the House.

Such, my dear Wilberforce, are my thoughts in general on a subject in which nobody, not even yourself, can take a deeper interest.

But the bell rings to prayers, and it is late, so I must finish for to-night, praying that you may be directed as is best and happiest for you and yours.

I am, my dear Wilberforce,

Yours ever very affectionately,

J. STEPHEN.

My opinion strongly inclines that you should not sit again for Yorkshire.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY.

Herstmonceux, near Battel, August 5, 1811.

My dear Lord Wellesley,

It would be worse than useless, by any remarks of my own, to attempt to add to the abhorrence which

will be excited in your mind, by the perusal of the inclosed paper; but it may be right for me to inform you, that it is transmitted to me by a very respectable dissenting minister, (respectable in point both of talents and character,) Mr. George Burder, who is secretary to the London Missionary Society. It may also be useful for you to know, that this Society is a very numerous body, which was formed about twelve to fifteen years ago (speaking from loose recollection), and has sent missionaries to the different islands in the South Seas, and to various other parts. It is supported by the voluntary subscriptions of persons of all the various religious denominations in this country, and once in every year there is a meeting, commonly in May, when, for several days together, sermons are preached and collections made; persons coming in great numbers from all parts of England to attend. The influence of the Society is therefore on the whole very considerable. From all I have heard, I am inclined to believe, that their missionaries have been more respectable, (Dr. Vanderkemp, Mr. Kicherer, &c.) and their success greater, at the Cape, and in its vicinity, than in any other quarter. I know not whether you ever happened to read Barrow's account of the Cape, 2 vols. 4to.; the accounts which it gives of the cruel treatment of the Hottentots, by the boors, strongly confirming Mr. Read's narrative. I have also seen, I am nearly sure, in the same work, a striking confirmation of all which Mr. Read states concerning the hatred felt by the boors towards the missionaries for their kindness to the Hottentots, of whom also Barrow, by the way, speaks in very high terms. The

boors were once planning a scheme for exterminating an entire settlement of the Moravian missionaries, and it was only the day before the assassinations were to have taken place, that the plot was discovered and prevented.

You, my dear Lord Wellesley, without a compliment, will know better than I can what course to pursue; whether or not, after more enquiry, any special commission should be sent out, to investigate, and if due presumptive proof be obtained, to try, the parties who are accused of these enormities. I am not aware how justice is administered at the Cape, but I hope in such a way as to prevent any bad effects from being produced by the influence of the boors. It is obvious, however, that it will be necessary to take all due precautions, to prevent the dread of these powerful men from rendering witnesses afraid of coming forward to give evidence. I ought perhaps to mention, what however is obvious, that the paper I inclose was not intended for the eye of government, and that it therefore speaks in plainer terms than it might otherwise use, of Lord Caledon and Major Cuyler. It is pleasing to observe the candour with which it mentions Lord Caledon; and indeed, from all I have heard of his character, I cannot but entertain a firm conviction of his disposition to do justice, and to suppress practices far less horrid than these. But to you, who know what terms were used in speaking of the missionaries in the East Indies, on whose learning and merits I need not dilate to him who so kindly protected them, it will not appear surprising, if the mind of Lord Caledon should have received a prejudice against the missionaries at the Cape. Perhaps you may wish to

hear farther particulars before you determine what course to pursue. Mr. Geo. Burder, who resides in Camberwell Grove, near London, will thankfully obey any summons he may receive from you.

I remain,

My dear Lord Wellesley,

Your Lordship's very truly,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P.S. I am just now about to write to your secretary, Mr. Hamilton, about the Calabar Portugal slave trade. May I beg the favour of you, when you have read the inclosed paper, to let Perceval see it?

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Herstmonceux, near Battel, August 23, 1811.

My dear Muncaster,

First be it known to you, that I have at last seen the spot, with my ignorance of which you reproached me the first year I had been here for some weeks, the very spot, where William the Conqueror planted his standard. To be within sight of that memorial of our humiliation on the one hand, and on the other to behold the place where Julius Cæsar landed, and afterwards defended his men while he was preparing for pushing his conquests, may seem somewhat ominous. But, *Te facimus fortuna Deum!* and to a man who has been reading Captain Pasley, such omens as these are of

trifling import. Have you read, by the way, Captain Pasley's late publication? It is certainly a work of great vigour of thought. You may differ from him as to many of the principles on which he proposes to act, and on the probability of success from pursuing the plans he has pointed out. But *you* must, I am sure, admire the spirit of the man, and not his spirit only, but his good sense.

There is, however, one great error running through his book, in which he reminds me of men who, calculating on lives and forces, &c. on paper, forget that friction and the air's resistance, and a thousand other causes, interfere in real life. Just so Captain Pasley forgets a certain body called the House of Commons!—a certain thing called party, another named opposition, and a fourth termed the finance committee. In short, our constitution, excellent as it is in most respects, is not calculated for carrying on offensive war with effect; and most ministers, from anticipating the jealousy with which they are to be watched, and the hard measure which is to be dealt out to them, abstain from engaging in any of that class of measures. Still, I say, read Captain Pasley. If I mistake not you will think it a book of more real vigour of thought and independence of character than any which has been written for several years, indeed, since the beginning of the last, or rather, for surely it is the same, of the present war.

Your last friendly letter, my dear Muncaster, reached me yesterday, and you truly say that though 100 miles nearer by the road book, we are substantially as far asunder as ever. I wish we were near enough to allow

of our having a *tête-à-tête.* There are one or two points on which I should be glad to talk with you, and when you hear that they are deeply interesting to me, I know I do not deceive myself in believing them to be not a little interesting to you. But separated as we are for the present, they must pass — another topic I cannot but mention to you. It is the price you pay for being known to call me friend, and not only to call, but to give cause for admitting the justice of the appellation. There are certain requests which one feels doubtful about making, and which at the same time one cannot refuse to make. I will send you my friend's letter. He is, I can truly say, a man of genuine worth, and he has *lived* down a great deal of opposition, the best way you will agree with me in which a theologian can defend his principles and vindicate his character. You must yourself judge of the propriety of undertaking the cause.

I enter into all you say about our friend Smyth's son's match, and am glad he is connecting himself with so good a family, as well as with so handsome a fortune. Your mention of Lord Castlecote brings old times to my remembrance. I beg you will give my friendly remembrances to him; and to the Morritts say all that is kind. Morritt is a man for whom I feel a real friendship; and I assure you he has never done himself justice. Between ourselves, I have often thought he ought to be at some time my successor. I must break off. Kindest remembrances to your daughters from Mrs. W. and

Your ever faithful,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Beaconsfield, Sunday afternoon, September 1, 1811.

My dear Wilberforce,

I have ridden thus far on my way to town, and mean to sleep here, though I must be at my office by eleven to-morrow. I rode, after morning service, through a most enchanting woodland path to the southward of Bledlowridge, and meant to take the afternoon service at Woburn, three miles below this place, and to hear Mr. Tyndale, a man you must like if you ever heard him, but found myself (by mis-information as to the hour of his afternoon service, and as to the distance of Woburn from the road) too late to go in with decency, and therefore have proceeded hither, — far enough, I think, for a Sabbath day's journey, though I and my horse are fresh enough to proceed. On asking, after dinner, for a book, and a good book, I amused the waiter, as I learned not only from a titter, but a conversation that I overheard. The landlady has furnished me, however, with a book that I do not remember to have seen before, — "Nelson's Companion for the Festivals and Fasts of the Church of England."

I was not exactly well pleased with my chance, but where may not a man find good if he seeks it? There is, in the brief character and account of the author prefixed, enough to excite attention and warm approbation. He, in some points, seems to have resembled yourself, and he led me to some comparisons of him with a very different sort of creature called James Stephen, not much

to the advantage of the latter, when I consider his zeal for those good works which more immediately respect God and the life to come. He dates his preface A.D. 1703, Ormond Street.*

The weakness of our natures, of my nature at least, make even these trifling identities aid the effect of comparison and contrast in other points. But what has led to the present scribble is a passage in which he points out the duty of building and, when necessary, repairing churches. This has really hit me as hard as if a man, or being, who had been inspecting my conduct during this week and the last, had written it on purpose to reprove me. It happens that the little chapel which Mr. Gilbert, aided by the subscriptions of private friends in and out of the parish, had built upon Bledlow Ridge, is, from an original fault in the structure, in danger of falling down. It is thought by Harper dangerous even to sit in at present. The roof must be taken off, &c., and William, on my last visit at Bledlow, was expressing his fears that a fifth part of the necessary expense could not be raised in the parish; yet if the chapel must be deserted, away goes, in winter at least, the church-going of one half of his poor parishioners. To do myself justice, I heard with a general, indefinite resolution of doing what I could to prevent this consequence. I believe I told him I would subscribe; but not one step have I taken, nor even formed one specific purpose on the subject: yet, shame to my selfishness! my thoughts have been anxiously employed on building a house, not for God, but for myself, on that very spot. My friend Forbes

* Mr. Stephen's house was in Ormond Street.

went there with me for the first time last week, and with all his philosophy and prudence, he is enthusiastic in his praise and admiration of Beech Grove, which he agrees with Mr. Babington in thinking the most beautiful farm he ever saw, and earnestly advised me to do all, and more than all that I meditated, in building a cottage residence upon it. Instead of 100*l.*, to which I had brought myself, he insists on my laying out 300*l.*, and vanquishes my scruples by his opinion of how much it will add even to the marketable value of the property; in short, I have been planning, estimating, contracting, and making two journies to determine the site, &c., without thinking (except in the way of procrastinating an unformed purpose) of the poor chapel, and "the house not made with hands" connected with it, in which my poor neighbours have so deep an interest.

I have been contriving to cherish the portion of the building season that remains this year. I have already pulled down, got materials, taken up all the vacant hands, and have been pleasing myself with the prospect of covering in by November, while, alas! the poor chapel by that time may be in ruins, and the poor without an accessible place of worship till the next summer, at least. Such is my selfishness and fondness for this bad world, after all the weaning from it I have supposed myself to have had.

Well! Nelson has smitten me for this: and now to my purpose. I know not what the repairs will cost; but I will know D. V. in a few days; and also what the few who can and will give in the parish are likely to contribute. If afterwards I find, as I fear I shall, more

help wanting than I can justifiably give, have you anything to spare that you can, all things considered, satisfactorily give to such a purpose? I will neither ask, nor allow you to subscribe more than half as much as I do. Your church-building purse has, I know, many claims on it; but I must confess, whatever the shame or sin be, that I do not recollect having ever given to such a purpose before. I am more apt to feel for the temporal than spiritual wants of my fellow-creatures, but, alas! not half enough for either, except in one hobby-horsical path.

I am,
My dear Wilberforce,
Ever very affectionately yours,
J. S.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO C. DUNCOMBE, ESQ. [now LORD FEVERSHAM.]

Yoxall Lodge, November 13, 1811.

My dear D.,

I trust, though I returned no answer to your last letter, that you would not impute my silence to my not sympathising with you and Lady C. in your heavy affliction. I hope you know too well the interest I take in what concerns you, and besides I am myself a father, and have a daughter whom I tenderly love. I scarcely need say, that when I wrote to you, I had not heard of the melancholy event; but I had seen it in the news-

paper, before I received your account of it. In one respect, my dear C., (allow me to open my heart to you without reserve,) your letter gave me real pleasure. It showed me that you were endeavouring to derive your consolation from the only true source. In such trying moments, it is indeed an unspeakable comfort to reflect, that the event we deplore has not happened by chance; but that it is the Ordination of an all-wise and all-merciful Being, who does not willingly or needlessly afflict His creatures.

In truth, such incidents are intended to remind us that this is not our home, but only a probationary state, in which we are to acquire that character, and those dispositions of mind which may qualify us for another and a better world; with the awful consideration, however, that unless we are thus fitted for happiness, we must not hope to enjoy it. My dear Duncombe, I am sure, while I am writing these truths, I feel their infinite importance to myself, and when I consider my own natural infirmities and weaknesses, (I am speaking of those of the heart of course) I should despair of seeing that great change effected on myself which must be wrought in order to our becoming admissible into the heavenly world, were it not for the gracious declarations contained in the Scriptures, that to the prayers of all who, conscious of their own inability, shall earnestly implore the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, in the Redeemer's and Mediator's name, they shall certainly be vouchsafed. For, religion, I hope I need not assure you, consists not in my mind, in abstaining from some of those public amusements and scenes of dissipation which

are so fashionable in the higher world; this abstinence at least is only intended as means to an end, and the obtaining of that end is the grand concern. Blessed be God, this, however, is an endeavour, in which, if we do not faint by the way, we may be assured we shall not, we cannot fail — for innumerable are the promises made to them that seek in the word of God, that blessed book which is so strangely neglected by multitudes who nevertheless believe in its Divine authority.

Following the impulse of my heart I have been led away into pouring forth an effusion which I should be afraid to send, except to something more than a nominal friend, who knows, I trust, the friendly feelings from which it has proceeded. I have scarcely left myself room to say that, having found among some tracts I brought down with me a beautiful little piece of a late excellent friend of mine, Mr. Cecil, I have resolved to send it to you. The late Archbishop of Canterbury I remember, when he lost a sweet young daughter just entering into life, told me, that he was excessively pleased, and he hoped profited as well as comforted by it. On the other subject I can say no more than I did; not liking to decide till I can consult a friend whom I hoped to see ere now, but shall not see, I now find, for some weeks. W.'s kind remembrances to Lady Charlotte, who I hope is pretty well, though I know what a shock she must have sustained.

I am,

My dear C.,

Yours most sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO REV. DR. COULTHURST.

Near London, February 28, 1812.

My dear Doctor,

I am almost apprehensive lest you should suspect me of being less attentive to your business*, I mean yours in your professional character, than I certainly ought to be, and I trust have been and shall be; but having been extremely engrossed, I have not written to you when I had nothing to say. Besides, you must remember that you led me to expect a paper of remarks, which a few days ago you told me you would send "next week." These I always meant to show to Mr. Rose, who is a man of candour, disposed to consider the objections made by reasonable men against any measures he brings forward. The commencement of your last letter had almost led me to put it into his hands, but on proceeding a little farther, I found that my good friend's warmth of feeling had produced a warmth of expression which might have been a little too strong for the Right Hon. Gentleman to swallow, at least without many a wry face. You West Indian gentlemen, children of the sun, relish a hot diet, and you season for others accordingly. But though the palate of an old secretary of the Treasury may be supposed not the most tenderly sensible, your remarks were so well peppered, that I feared lest their pungency should provoke the Right Hon. Gentleman to refuse every dish in future which should have been prepared by the same hand. If the mess you promised me be not

* Mr. Rose's Bill on Parochial Registration.

already on its way, let me beg you to abstract some of the seasoning so as to fit it for a moderate taste. Then what you present will go down (to carry on the metaphor), and, being well digested, may prove beneficial to the body politic.

To discontinue my figurative style, which, however, you will understand so well, (being yourself a master in this line,) that I need not translate it into plain English, I will send you down two bills as soon as they are printed, one for yourself, the other for circulation among your friends. You shall also have plenty of time for urging objections. Remember, however, that though the measure ought not to press on the incumbent of the largest parish with insufferable weight, as would have been the case according to its original state, yet it cannot be expected that a measure may not be generally beneficial, though it may be somewhat too onerous for such a parish as yours. The truth is, your living ought to have treble the stipend which is annexed to it, and you then might be able to have more assistance, so as by dividing the load, to render each person's share of it less burthensome. But I must break off for the present, begging you to communicate to me your remarks fully and freely, only let them be without any of those general observations on Mr. Rose's qualifications, &c., which must prevent my showing them to him as I could wish. I am ever, with kind regards to Mrs. C.,

My dear Doctor,

Ever sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JOHN BOWDLER JUN., ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Malta, March 18, 1812.

My dear Sir,

Your very kind letter, which is now before me, is dated on the 23d of December; but it did not reach my hands till about ten days ago. This was owing to my having altered my first plans, and spent the winter at Palermo instead of Malta, which was attended (notwithstanding my endeavours to the contrary) with the suspension, during three months, of my intercourse with England. I arrived at this place on the 6th of March, and found your letter and others from England waiting my arrival. I thus heard, for the first time, of the loss of voice from which you have suffered during a part of the winter, and I cannot tell you how much this intelligence sharpened a certain feeling of self-reproach which sometimes visited me for not having written to you. Had I entertained the least idea of your illness, I could not, believe me, have been so negligent; but I felt unwilling to make you pay a heavy postage for half a dozen lines, and partly from the languor of invalidism, partly from the detention of my letters at Malta (which took away the incentive that receiving letters always supplies for writing them), I let the days and weeks slip by me unperceived. I do most earnestly hope, for the sake of your own happiness and of the happiness of many, many others, which is intimately connected with yours, that your complaint has retired, and that the use of your voice is restored. I know the pains of a long *necessary* silence, and grieve to think that you should be subject to them.

You give me but a poor account also of Mrs. W.'s health, for which I am very sincerely concerned. I am very sensible of the truth of what you say, that the delicacy of her health and spirits makes her hardly equal to what you call the public line; and it was one of the things which, in a conversation with Lord C. last summer, he urged to show the advisableness of your executing a plan then in contemplation, and respecting which you will recollect to have conversed with me. It was impossible not to feel it; but it struck me as a thing which there was some danger of feeling rather too strongly, on a question so important as that then under your consideration. This, however, was only on the supposition that it was rather a predilection (truly natural to a pious mind) for the calm scenes of retirement, than any failure, or apprehended failure, of health or spirits. It is my most earnest wish and prayer that your health and Mrs. W.'s may be re-established, and long continue firm; or, if it please God to dispose it otherwise, that every pain and privation may be abundantly compensated by spiritual strength and comforts, and by those satisfactions which He has bountifully united to the active exercise of our faculties and feelings. To feel, and to be the object of every benevolent affection, is surely among the purest and best of earthly satisfactions. These undoubtedly are yours, and from these bodily infirmities can never subtract much; often they increase them. The pains of illness have with me been fully compensated by the testimonies of affection I have received from those whom I most love and value. It is so inexpressibly delightful to feel one's self beloved! I

had rather enjoy the affection of one person than the applause of a thousand. I will not wish for you an increase of this sort of happiness; it can hardly be possessed in this state more perfectly; but of every other may the Father of all mercies give to you and yours, according to His wisdom, abundantly.

What you say of ——— gives me great pleasure. Pray remember me to him very kindly, and assure him of my high esteem and most affectionate regard. I fully intended writing to him by this packet, but it has arrived from Messina rather unexpectedly, and now it is impossible for me to do more than finish this, and write to my father. All you say of the value and danger of generalisation is most true. There are few things that I dread more than a dry cold metaphysical habit of abstraction; a miserable plant without bloom or beauty, suited to the ungenial climate that gave it birth. I do not, however, fear for ———. In mixed society and business every thing is against abstraction; our indolence, our feelings, the nature of the objects presented to us—which are all details, the example of the world around us. I suspect it is good for a young man to set out with rather a large stock of abstract principles and habits; unless, indeed, he is to live in Edinburgh. Oh how glad I am that you admire the Curse of Kehama; not that I have read a word of it myself (it is a luxury on which I feed my fancy in prospect), but I am so passionately fond of Thalaba, which I am told it greatly resembles, and think that such monstrous injustice has been done to that poem by the Edinburgh reviewers, that I am quite delighted to get your vote on my side. My passion for

Thalaba is what I do not avow, knowing that it would generally pass for craziness. Do not betray me. In eloquence, feeling, and moral sublimity, Southey is to me the first of all living poets.

I meant to tell you a good deal about Sicily, but have only a little space left. Every thing was going on well in that island when I left it. Lord William has already carried some of the most important points under discussion; and by his manliness, integrity, and wisdom, has secured the confidence both of the prince and the nobility. They are strongly prejudiced against each other, but both esteem and honour him. This has doubled his power, and given him just that sort of authority which is the most agreeable and the most useful. I have a very high opinion and a very warm regard for him. He is a man of strict consciousness of character and sound abilities, with a remarkable union of moderation and courage, very valuable in his public character, and very estimable and amiable in all his private relations. He talked to me several times about you. I feel very grateful to both for constant kindness and many unmerited attentions. Lord W.'s private secretary, Obins, a young clergyman and near relation of Lady W., is a very excellent and pleasing man. He is to return home this summer, and I am sure (if an opportunity offers) you will let me have the pleasure of introducing him to you. Pray give my kindest regards and remembrances to Mrs. Wilberforce, and believe me,

Ever most affectionately yours,

J. Bowdler.

I know not what to say about my health; I have gained ground, but am still not perfectly re-established.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO Z. MACAULAY, ESQ.

Kensington Gore, May, 1812.
Near 2, Thursday.

My dear Macaulay,

I had scarcely finished my note to you yesterday, when letters and depositions were put into my hands with an earnest request that I would immediately take them to the Secretary of State. Disturbances similar to those of Nottingham have begun near Huddersfield. After a short pause, I judged that I had no right to neglect the duties of my station, providentially occurring, in order to attend to a business which however important was less specially committed to my care. This morning again, from breakfast and at it, till now when I have left people in the dining-room to write this note, I have had persons with me on business whom I could not exclude. It grieved me till I reflected that it was the ordination of that Being whose cause I wished to plead, and who knows better than we do what instruments to employ in such services.

I have been consoling myself with reflecting, that perhaps publishing in "The Christian Observer" might have put our opponents on counteracting us, and that it may be as well for us to work for a time in private. But I am sadly discouraged by the lukewarmness of some from whom I hoped better things. But do you your best, I will do mine. Let us be clear of the blood, whosoever may have to answer for it. I found the other day, that some Anglo-Indians, literary men and living in the literary circles, were discrediting and causing others to

discredit Buchanan's Account of the burning of Hindoo widows round Calcutta, by saying, "the account should have been published in the East, where it could have been contradicted. But no, he published it only after he came home."

I have written to Dr. Buchanan, and learn with joy that his memoir, which contains the account of the burnings for thirty miles round Calcutta in 1804, as stated by Dr. Carey, came out in Calcutta in 1806; that Dr. B. staid in Calcutta till 1808, talking with all the learned people about every part of the memoir, and that the burnings were never denied; that he, in the service of government, presented a copy of his work to government, and desired that any error might be pointed out: but none was discovered. You may hear the same stories, and therefore I send you the contradiction of them.

Yours ever,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO H. BANKES, ESQ.

Kensington Gore, Saturday, July 25, 1812.

My dear Bankes,

I am in all the horrors of packing up, being on the point of leaving these parts. Having therefore an almost infinite number of matters on my hands, I should not now sit down to write to you, but for my having omitted to do it yesterday, as I told Canning I would,

and fully designed to do. But at last I really forgot it, under circumstances which, I believe, any one would admit to be almost an excuse. I was to have told you that matters were still uncertain. He had received a long, and by the way a very good, letter from Lord Liverpool, disapproving of the plan that Vansittart should be Chancellor of the Exchequer and middle man, Lord Castlereagh and he being the two secretaries (you will remember the plan); but offering Castlereagh to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Canning to have Castlereagh's place of Foreign Secretary. Lord Liverpool argued that there was no inferiority, &c.; but still stated clearly that Castlereagh, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Secretary of State, were to be precisely on the same footing as other Chancellors of Exchequer and Secretaries of State (naming them), when there had been no First Lord of the Treasury in the House of Commons. Canning had rejoined, proposing that he should do the business of both Secretaries of State, conceiving this had not been unusual in the existing circumstances; Castlereagh and Lord Liverpool assented to this, if it should be found that it had not been unusual. But both Lord Liverpool and Lord Castlereagh stand firm on the ground, that the two are to be exactly in the same situations as other Chancellors of Exchequer and Secretaries of State. It is to be settled to-day; I really cannot well guess how. I own I think it the best plan, but for one objection, viz., that I am persuaded Vansittart would be a better Chancellor of the Exchequer than either of them, by far better; and I have also a high

esteem and real regard for him. I therefore much preferred the other arrangement.

I never was more surprised than when I heard you were off into Dorsetshire. I had no idea of your being on the wing so soon. I should, *inter alia*, have settled with you about the manuscript.* I shall not venture to take it to Sandgate now, lest you should wish to have it sent down to you. But if you can spare it for some time, or receive it and send it back to me, I should be much obliged to you, and I should lose nothing, for in the next five weeks, while my eldest boy is with me, I shall not be able to read it with my own eyes; and it is really a great injustice to let my amanuensis hammer it out to me. But when my son leaves me I should thankfully fall to. Farewell, and believe me, with best regards to Mrs. Bankes and all the house of B.,

My dear B.,

Ever sincerely and affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

I should say much on the negociation, but for want of space.

REV. DR. BUCHANAN TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Kirby Hall, August 6, 1812.

My dear Sir,

I was favoured with your letter this morning, and now enclose a letter for Lord Liverpool, which I shall be obliged to you to transmit with the paper. The sum

* Bankes's History of Rome.

applied for in behalf of Mr. W. was 200*l.* We request that you will not notice the subscription: it is not of your class — sacred necessity. I smiled at your saying that "you do not lay by anything." I was rather afraid that your unexampled charity would bring you into debt.

I smiled again when you said you hoped to get through your mass of papers at Sandgate, and be once more a *liber homo;* as if there could be any possible hope of your being a free man in this world.

I returned from Scarborough a few days ago. I had proposed to have passed into the West, but the agitation of the carriage is too much for me in my present state; I am, however, benefited by the warm baths of Scarborough. Good Serle, I see by this day's paper, is gone to his own Immanuel. We are all well here, and pray that you may have divine support and comfort in all your tribulation, till that blessed day when you also (a *liber homo*) shall

> Clap the glad wing and soar away,
> And mingle with eternal day.

If you go before me let your mantle drop on your servant,

C. Buchanan.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MISS WILBERFORCE.

Lutterworth, October 16, 1812.

My dearest B.,

I am much pressed for time to-day; but I must send an answer, though a short one, to my dear girl's highly acceptable letter, for I do not consider as a reply the few lines which I added to my letter to mamma two or three days ago. While I am rambling about from place to place my heart still keeps its station; and, strange as it may seem, a certain little girl has such a firm hold on my affection, that wherever I am, she is continually presenting herself to my mind's eye, and calling forth the most tender wishes for her happiness. The day, I trust, will come, when she will be able to travel about with me, not merely in idea, but in her own person. Meanwhile, we should be thankful for having the means of hearing about those we love when we are far removed from them. We are now almost two hundred miles asunder, yet I trust B. will be reading this the day after to-morrow, at about the same time of day at which I am now writing it. I trust that all my children, especially the elder ones, are more eminently careful when I am away, to abstain from all that would give mamma pain, and to do whatever will give her pleasure, in order to make up to her for my absence. May God bless my dear children, and more particularly my dear little girl. How ardently do I long to see clear and indubitable proofs of your having received that divine grace which we must all possess before we can be admitted into the heavenly world. In you, and in my other children, I

am always looking to discover any buddings of that fruit of the Spirit which this blessed agent will produce where it really operates, just as a gardener looks over his fruit trees from day to day to see whether the peaches and the nectarines are beginning to appear. I trust I do discern, now and then, a bud in my beloved child's heart. Oh! cherish it, my dearest child, and try to prevent its being nipped or blasted, so as not to come to perfection.

I fear I am not likely to become an entertaining correspondent; it is, however, for a reason which will plead my excuse, — it is because I love her too well not to feel a serious concern for her happiness whenever I think about her. To a common correspondent I could scribble in a facetious strain, and I will try to be more lively in my letters to you, but I recollect that this packet will reach you on Sunday, and therefore I need not check the natural feelings of my heart, which to-day will harmonise with those of my dear girl. I have given you the time which was due to some other correspondents, but I have been drawn on; and now that I am no longer M. P. for Yorkshire, I hope to be able to allot much more, both of my time, and my thoughts to my children. Once more, may God bless you.

Ever your most affectionate

W. Wilberforce.

LORD BATHURST, TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Docketted. "Lord Bathurst about Mr. Kendal: good-humoured fun. I had told him that I wished to make sure lest he should be turned out."]

Downing Street, November 13, 1812.

Dear Wilberforce,

I received your letter when I was at Brighton, where I had gone for a few days to see Lady Bathurst.

I inclose a letter in form, such as I imagine you wish: although I must say you explained your reason for asking for such a document in too plain a way. There is nothing so disgusting to a Secretary of State as to talk to him of the probability of his going out. (Your wish was not father, I hope, to that thought.) But to hold this language in the dreary month of November, on the eve of the meeting of parliament, was most inconsiderate.

Yours ever sincerely,

BATHURST.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO Z. MACAULAY, ESQ.

Kensington Gore, Friday, December 11, 1812.

My dear Macaulay,

I return you ——'s paper*, regretting sincerely that I cannot add to it, but really I have not the faculty of writing with facility anything that is fit to be read, and it is still more difficult to interweave any additions into the finished work of another than to write a fresh piece.

* *Vide* Review of Edgeworth's Tales of Fashionable Life. Christian Observer, December, 1812.

There is however one idea, one doubt, which I ought to state to you.

We who know —— well, can have no doubt of his having treated Miss Edgeworth's entire exclusion of all religious principle with the softness, sometimes almost the easy *badinage* of his reproofs, from a persuasion that the real operating drug in the composition would be least likely to turn the stomach, or rather would sit the best on it when so mixed up and qualified. But should not this be stated frankly in the close, either by the writer of the article himself or by you? It might be done in the very way I have mentioned. You might state, In all compound medicines the physician commonly depends on some one powerful drug to do the business, considering how he may so combine it with other ingredients as to render the patient most willing, or rather most able to bear it; or, to speak more plainly, as will either render it less nauseous to the palate or least offensive to the stomach. We conceive that the writer of the foregoing article has acted on a similar principle, &c. I almost fear the piece would otherwise be objectionable, on the ground of levity, or rather on that of the want of sufficient seriousness. Yet I have only read it once over, and that, of necessity, by fits and starts. You know it better than I, and will judge better whether or not my criticism is well founded. I assure you it often grieves me to reflect that I am not a contributor of any thing better than good wishes to the Christian Observer, and I will be something better by and by if I can; but if, while M. P. for Yorkshire, I had much more than I could do, I am sure, I have at pre-

sent full as much, and hitherto the difference is not so great as you might suppose. It is in the spring that the chief difference will be experienced. Did you hear of Mr. Protheroe's speech the other night? — extremely good indeed — farewell.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

MRS. H. MORE, TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Barley Wood, April 12, 1813.

My dear Friend,

I hope you will think we have done wonders in Bristol, considering the shortness of the time. I next thought of Manchester. I named to a very sensible neighbour, Mrs. Quincey, late of Manchester, your idea about getting petitions for christianising India; she sent me the inclosed, desiring me to get a frank and send it, but we are both so afraid we have not exactly met your wishes that I think it safer to trouble you to read it.

I think it will give you pleasure to hear that I have had a warm and most friendly letter from a certain episcopal preceptor, to inform me that he has just made his illustrious pupil read through with him "a certain two volumes, written some years ago, for her immediate instruction;" that "she read it with the deepest attention, and constantly expressed the highest approbation."

It gives me pleasure to know before I die that the book has not been written altogether in vain, and that the Bishop had the wisdom to keep it back till she was of an age to understand it. I implore you to keep this to yourself. It would be highly improper that it should come from me, nor have I written a word of it to any body.

My health is very bad — surely this tough body cannot much longer hold out against such repeated attacks. Pray for me, that the soul may prosper and be in health, but it is sadly clogged by its suffering companion.

Yours ever, my dear friend,

H. More.

ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

February 26, 1813.

My dear Sir,

I received your letter the day before yesterday, and would have despatched what you wished for yesterday, but could not get it out of the hands of the bookseller until yesterday evening, it having been necessary to soften a glued back which it had, to make it fit for the mail bag. I hope to send it to-night.

I wish I could at this moment make any plain and brief observation that might assist you in the important investigation which engages your mind. I doubt, however, whether time may not be yet amply before you, as the pains the leaders of the Roman Catholics have taken

to make themselves and their followers be suspected of dangerous views can hardly have failed to turn against them several of their former advocates, and consequently to produce an unfavourable decision. If it prove otherwise, I shall be surprised; and if the liberality, thus evinced, be attended with proportionate caution and deliberation, I shall be highly gratified.

Your feeling with me on "the grand argument" gives me much pleasure. I myself am by no means sure that certain exclusions may not, at least for the present, be matter of strict expediency. The places of cabinet ministers, of chancellor, of lord lieutenant, and chief secretary of Ireland, of commanders-in-chief, by sea or land, ought to be in no hands whose attachment to the whole existing constitution can be justly suspected. I do not feel in the same way respecting privy counsellors. There is, no doubt, something imposing in the name; but is it not *magni nominis umbra* — a privy counsellor being in reality no more intrusted with the King's secrets than any other member of parliament? My principle respecting their degree of admission is simply this; I would give them every thing that could magnetise them, and nothing that could injure us.

In balancing the account between these two results, I should decide very differently, if I considered the Roman Catholic religion to be stationary. Were this my persuasion, my fears would be far more on the alert. But most deeply and deliberately considering it as a declining religion, I wish a safe direction to be given to its slow but certain movement. I think if we do not repel the Roman Catholic body, it will approximate to

us; and perhaps at no great distance of time, exhibit the phenomenon of a new reformation. I acknowledge that my political solicitudes are chiefly kept awake by this moral anticipation; and I should rather see dangers boldly faced (though in reality I think there are no new dangers to be reckoned on*) than that obstacles should be left in the way of a consummation so devoutly to be wished for.

I should therefore wish that Roman Catholics possessing lay patronage in the establishment should be allowed themselves to exercise the power of presenting. To deprive them would keep up the old enmity; to allow their presenting would, in spite of themselves, familiarise them, and at length attach them. And, then, consider; what hurt could they do? The Roman Catholic is not like the Arian or Socinian, whose errors from their strictly mental nature admit of being concealed, and stealthily diffused. The Roman Catholic must avow himself. His religion admits of no compromise. It distinguishes itself from ours much more in outward observances than in inward principles; and it insists on all its distinctions with unyielding severity. Truth, therefore, may be undermined by error where the emissary can wear a mask; but when to wear a mask would be, *ipso facto*, to renounce that for whose sake it is supposed to be worn, whatever we may have still to fear from open attack, we have little to apprehend from deep-laid treachery.

What I mean plainly to say is, that no secret partisan

* That is supposing the EXCLUSION for a time from high executive offices, as advised in the preceding page. — (Note by Mr. Knox.)

of the Church of Rome could take orders or officiate in ours. The thing itself, I dare to say, is impossible. The utmost in this way which could take place, would be a proselyte's delaying his open profession, until he had published something which his antecedent character might procure a reading for, while the avowal of the new character would infallibly deter. I imagine we have just one instance of this — in a work called an "Essay toward a Proposal for Catholic Communion." But no one could be deceived by it. In truth, the very moment in which any one attempted to act on that side, would be also the moment of infallible detection. The ass would appear under the lion's skin. Thus when Parker, Bishop of Oxford, began to take the side of James II. against his Protestant brethren, it could not be concealed for a moment. Every one saw immediately what was in his view; and he was animadverted on accordingly, by those who had engaged as champions for Protestantism.

My conclusion from these premises is, that Roman Catholics possessing church patronage could have no motive to use that power in any way different from patrons generally. Patrons must present Church of England men, or at least those who are willing to appear such; which it is morally impossible any Roman Catholic should be. As I said, an Arian, a Socinian, a Swedenborgian, may wear the livery of our establishment. But to a Roman Catholic it would be infinitely worse than Saul's armour was to David.

When the choice, then, made by Roman Catholics must be, by the nature of things, confined to Church of

England clergymen, and when it is utterly unlikely that their choice should be systematically worse than that of others, why should we tremble at giving Roman Catholics a privilege which is possessed by Dissenters, Arians, Socinians, Deists, and even Jews, without as yet awaking a sense of danger by any ostensible mischief? Lay patronage is too likely in any case to be secularly exercised; but to my understanding, not more likely in a Roman Catholic gentleman than in a Protestant chancellor. Conscientious considerations might influence the Roman Catholic. In proportion as he was religious in his own way, he would like to prefer a religious man. But court patronage seldom adverts to niceties of personal character. It turns on another point, and is fixed by other attractions; I own, therefore, on the whole, I can imagine no possible bad consequences from Roman Catholics being patrons, as well as others; and I can conceive good consequences, namely, greater conscientiousness, and growing conciliation.

When I say that the Roman Catholic religion is declining, I do not mean that individuals are deserting it, but that its external professors are losing their respect for it. For example, both priests and laics who regard their religion would assure you, that scarcely any of the present declaimers have any real value for the principles which they affect to contend for. Some of them are notorious scoffers at all religion. If things continue as they are, these characters must multiply, were it only from the increasing custom of sending their sons, when meant for a profession, to our University. The course of education there cannot but enlarge their views, and

induce a habit of judging boldly and decisively on all subjects. Before this exercise of mind their own religion cannot stand. While it is to be contended for politically, they will contend for it; but at the same instant it will be the object of their scorn. The only means, therefore, of avoiding the impending infidelity which this state of things portends, will be to withdraw the revolting barrier which now obstructs their view of our Church, or rather suffers them to see all that can alienate, and nothing that can engage. While they suffer felt privations avowedly for the sake of the establishment, this enmity must continue, and while it continues, all their prejudices must remain. The national Church must be observed, and thought of in one way or the other. Its magnitude and ostensible movements insure this; and therefore, if the ever-recurring thought be accompanied by no other but painful associations, the result must be settled, unremitting, unappeasable malignity, and that strongest where there are amplest means of doing mischief.

On the other hand, do away the privations, and the established religion will become in its proportion an object of fair and philosophical inquiry. Thus contemplated, it will be seen that the same generic features are apparent in both churches; and these great points will seem supported by a concurrent testimony, deriving much additional strength from circumstantial discordance. In matters respecting which the two Churches differ, their doubts will, of course, increase; but in matters respecting which they agree, it may be hoped they will feel the greatest possible confirmation: thus the

evil will be prevented which has been so prevalent in countries purely Roman Catholic. There, religion appearing in the one form only, there was no opportunity for instructive comparison, and to reject the tenets of their Church was to plunge at once into the gulf of infidelity. In this country there is the promise of better things, if the means which Providence has furnished are suffered to operate. If we only let our Church unveil itself, and cast away the worse than goatskin covering of penal statutes, it will not fail to attract and to conciliate, in proportion as reason and taste create a faculty of discrimination.

I intimated, already, that it was not multiplied proselytism that I looked forward to; but an internal reformation of the Irish Roman Catholic Church. I am aware that this is an idea liable to be thought fanciful; but the more I see of passing events, the stronger conviction I feel, that if room be left for growing tendencies to take their natural course, such a crisis must, at no great distance of time, infallibly take place. Proselytism there no doubt will be, and so numerous, probably, as to force the heads of the Roman Catholic Church to adroit changes, in order to prevent the total dissolution of their system. These changes, I conceive, will in the first instance be the dropping the Latin service, and the giving the sacrament in both kinds. But these will not be introduced without concomitants; and if enmity shall have previously passed away, our Church will be looked to as a model in whatever alterations shall be made, till, at length, gradual assimilation on their part will end in the coalescence of both.

I could enumerate prognostics of the event which I am imagining. I could show that the opinion of Roman Catholic divines respecting the salvability of Protestants has materially advanced during the last hundred, or hundred and fifty years; and that though the doctrine of the Church remains avowedly unaltered, the mode of explaining that doctrine has undergone an important change in various instances: for example, it is evident that the worship of images, and prayers to the Virgin and saints, are at this day as much as possible explained away; and that the practices would willingly be dropped if it could be done without acknowledgment of error. These tendencies cannot but go on, and they must at length ripen into substantial results, though it is not for us to know the times and the seasons.

These last-mentioned circumstances are of a general nature: Ireland exhibits not a few peculiar to herself. A practice has grown up within the last twenty years, of preaching almost as many charity sermons in Roman Catholic chapels as in our churches. There is an imitation of every charitable institution of ours which has MIND for its object; and these establishments can only be maintained by public collections. To such sermons Protestants are numerously invited, particularly as collectors; a consequence of which is, that in common courtesy, and for the sake of the object, nothing must be said offensive to Protestant feelings. But as the best preachers are employed on these occasions, a general habit of uncontroversial preaching will gradually come into fashion: besides, accustoming themselves thus to see us intermingled with themselves, at their own in-

stance, in their places of worship, they must, in spite of themselves, feel toward us as fellow-christians, which feeling alone, active causes of mutual hostility once removed, must lead to growing good-will, and ultimate connexion.

A still stronger influence is arising from increase of knowledge, extension of education, and the unrestrained reading of the Scriptures. The heads of the Roman Catholic Church are endeavouring to regulate this last-mentioned practice, by publishing, as abundantly as possible, their own translation; but they would be wiser for their cause if they suffered ours to be read without animadversion. The established translation is too well known to be kept out of view; and the differences between the two will be observed, and will stimulate curiosity; besides, persons of taste and discernment will see the superiority of our translation in smoothness and elegance. A certain liberty of mind will thus gradually, perhaps speedily, be formed, which will call for other methods of management than those hitherto relied upon; and the heads of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland will be reduced to the alternative of new-modifying their system, or losing their flock.

A circumstance bearing with some weight on this point is, that the Roman Catholic clergy are themselves differently affected respecting these subjects; some are more liberal; others less. As an evidence of liberality, I can state from a document now before me, that in an extensive charity school in this city, supported and superintended by Protestants, in which 800 children are taught, the Bible is uniformly read; and yet in the

book in which visiters make remarks, there have been within the last year testimonials expressed in the strongest terms from Roman Catholic priests, and one testimonial from a Roman Catholic bishop.

"I visited this school," says one of the priests, Oct. 19. 1812, "and am so much delighted with its admirable system, that on the same, two schools, one for boys and the other for girls, will be erected in —— parish."

The Roman Catholic bishop's testimonial is, "I have been highly gratified on this day, in observing the manner in which this school is conducted, and do think the master highly meritorious for his mode of conducting it."

There is, therefore, you may perceive, nothing like a systematic opposition to advancing knowledge; and on the contrary, in some a disposition to meet and cherish it. But these are still only commencing habits: what, then, must they not come to, if irritation should once give place to mutual good temper, and if oblivion of political differences were permitted to smooth the path toward religious agreement?

You may have observed, in reading the foregoing paragraphs, that I dwell upon a probable, or rather, morally certain, improvement of the Roman Catholic system, rather than on an express adoption of ours. I do so because I hold the latter to be out of all reckoning, and the aiming at it to have been the grand mistake during the last hundred years. In the course of that period what has been accomplished by penal statutes, pensioning of proselyted priests, and supporting Protestant charity schools? No doubt Providence has secured its own ends in them all, but the intention of

their projectors has been perfectly defeated. To follow Providence is always the wisest course; and without the special order of Providence, a regular Roman Catholic hierarchy could never have remained to this day in Ireland. Having, then, before us a perfectly organised Church, whose formation at the first, and still more its sustenance to this hour, never could be the mere result of human will, and whose dissolution we, at least, have no means of achieving, why should we not set ourselves as much as possible to meliorate what, in fact, we cannot destroy? As long as the latter object was hoped for, pains and penalties were fair expressions of that hope; but if the aim at gradual melioration appear at length more reasonable, to set those we wish to work upon at their ease will be as congenial to the new process, as restrictions and privations were to the old.

Mosheim, a sharp-sighted observer, gives this definition of the Anglican Church:—"*Illa* veteris religionis correctio *quæ Britannos æque a pontificiis, atque a reliquis familiis quæ Pontificis dominationi renunciarunt, sejungit.*" How far the equidistance is truly asserted, I will not take upon me to pronounce; but to my mind, the idea of *veteris religionis correctio* is so critically just, that the Roman Catholic religion, rationally reformed, would substantially be the religion of the Church of England. That it would become so at once, I do not suppose; but that it would gradually advance toward it, until Providence saw fit to terminate the process, I no more question, were hinderances removed, than that a heavy body would fall when no longer supported.

Where, then, I would ask, is the real danger of setting

forward these hopeful tendencies by a liberal repeal of all that could irritate? Is fear entertained that the Roman Catholic Church of Ireland might at length supplant ours, and become the established religion of Ireland? This is impossible. The Roman Catholic church would shrink from any such connexion with a Protestant * government as establishment would necessarily imply. To retain its religious independence is essential to its integrity as Roman Catholic. As a church, therefore, it never can aspire to so fatal a distinction. To consent to receive honours and emoluments from a Protestant state, would be to sign its own spiritual death-warrant. It may be brought gradually to be what this would make it, by the sun shining on it after so long and so cold a winter. But while unlike us, it would refuse to take our place, and in proportion as it becomes like us, it will not aim at supplantation, but rather at co-incorporation.

I fear I have taken up too much of your time, and perhaps to little satisfactory purpose; I must now close my letter without reading it over, or lose this evening's mail.

Ever yours,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

* The Roman Catholic Church has since been established by the King of Prussia in Westphalia — with what result is well known.

JOHN BOWDLER, ESQ., JUN., TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Widley, March 23, 1813.

My dear Sir,

I meant to have returned the enclosed, and to have thanked you for your kind letter as long ago as Saturday, but I have been prevented. To dear ——— I had written almost immediately on hearing of his affliction; but I directed my letter to Grosvenor Square, and perhaps it has not been forwarded. I greatly love and admire him.

I agree with you on the Catholic question, and should have voted as you have done. I believe that we are even of the same opinion as to all the details of the question. I do not wonder that you should feel a little distressed at finding yourself differing from many excellent men on this question; yet I do not know why they should be better judges in politics than in law, and I am sure I should not feel uneasy at differing from all the good men in the kingdom in the construction of an act of parliament. Piety is not a security for a perfect correctness of judgment even in religious questions; witness Luther's strange reasoning, and still stranger conduct, about the sacrament; as well as thousands of other instances that would occur to a person well acquainted with the history of Christianity, faster than he could write them. *Liberari animam meam* is all the wisest of us can reach.

Knox's letter is very eloquent and instructive. I cannot help thinking that his view of the subject is more just as well as more liberal than that of many good men in this

country, who seem to think of the Catholic Church as Mr. Burke did of Jacobinism, that "it is pure dephlegmated defecated evil," incapable of any amelioration. All general principles are against this, and I think, too, the history of that church itself. There was a greater distance between a furious Italian bigot and the Jansenists, than between the Jansenists and the best Protestants. Yet I confess I startle at Knox's idea of giving to the papist gentry the enjoyment of church patronage. It seems to me to involve almost an absurdity, nor do I see how a conscientious Roman Catholic could exercise the right, or wish to possess it. What Knox says about the nature of popery consisting in externals is doubtless in part true; yet I suspect that Father Escobar, or Vasquez, or any of Pascal's heroes, would have both accepted Protestant preferment, and found means to lead their flock more than half way to popery, without incurring any ecclesiastical censures, still less deprivation. Surely, too, Mr. Knox is on very delicate and dangerous ground, when he talks of the Romish hierarchy having been preserved by Providence through so many ages in Ireland. I remember the same argument being used by one who had little religion, in favour of all the abominations embodied under the name of religion in India. Providence, he said, had given them their religion as He had given us ours.

I wish to add one word about myself. You were kind enough to mention, without disapprobation, some religious papers which I sent to "The Christian Observer." I have since, as perhaps you have seen, written others. I thought myself only known to a very few

intimate friends, but have just now discovered that the name of the author has been mentioned very openly. I have really always felt that I was guilty of some presumption in venturing to write on religious subjects, and cannot but feel that many who see these papers, on hearing that they were written by a young layman, will probably think, and perhaps say, that he would have been much better employed in learning and practising than in attempting to teach. I am not sure whether on these and other accounts I shall not discontinue these communications; but whether I do or not, may I hope that at least you and Mrs. W. will believe, that in writing these papers I was not actuated by vanity, still less that I indulge the least idea of being better qualified than hundreds of others to publish on religious topics. My real motives it would require space to explain fully; but my own exercise and improvement was the chief. My only apology is, that a mask generally is understood to confer a right, even to the humblest individual, of speaking with some freedom. My value for your good opinion has induced me to say thus much — and pray forgive my egotism. I am pretty well, and begging you to present my best respects to Mrs. W., am,

Dear Sir,

Ever your affectionate servant,

J. Bowdler.

REV. DR. COKE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

At Samuel Hague's, Esq.
Leeds, April 14, 1813.

Dear and highly respected Sir,

A subject which appears to me of great moment lies much upon my mind; and yet it is a subject of such a delicate nature, that I cannot venture to open my mind upon it to any one, of whose candour, piety, delicacy, and honour, I have not the highest opinion. Such a character I do indubitably esteem you, sir; and as such, I will run the risk of opening my whole heart to you upon the point.

For at least twelve years, sir, the interests of our Indian empire have lain very near my heart. In several instances I have made attempts to open a way for missions in that country, and even for my going over there myself. But every thing proved abortive.

The prominent desire of my soul, even from my infancy (I may almost say), has been to be useful. Even when I was a Deist for part of my time at Oxford, (what a miracle of grace!) usefulness was my most darling object. The Lord has been pleased to fix me for about thirty-seven years on a point of great usefulness. My influence in the large Wesleian connexion, the introduction and superintendence of our missions in different parts of the globe, and the wide sphere opened to me for the preaching of the Gospel to almost innumerable large and attentive congregations, have opened to me a very extensive field for usefulness. And yet I could give up all for India. Could I but close my life in being the

means of raising a spiritual church in India, it would satisfy the utmost ambition of my soul here below.

I am not so much wanted in our connexion at home as I once was. Our committee of privileges, as we term it, can watch over the interests of the body, in respect to laws and government, as well in my absence as if I was with them. Our missionary committee in London can do the same in respect to missions; and my absence would only make them feel their duty more incumbent upon them. Auxiliary committees through the nation (which we have now in contemplation) will amply supply my place in respect to raising money. There is nothing to influence me much against going to India, but my extensive sphere for preaching the Gospel. But this, I do assure you, sir, sinks considerably in my calculation, in comparison of the high honour (if the Lord was to confer it upon me in His Providence and grace) of beginning or reviving a genuine work of religion in the immense regions of Asia.

Impressed with these views, I wrote a letter about a fortnight ago to the Earl of Liverpool. I have either mislaid the copy of it, or destroyed it at the time, for fear of its falling into improper hands. After an introduction, drawn up in the most delicate manner in my power, I took notice of the observations made by Lord Castlereagh in the House of Commons, concerning a religious establishment in India connected with the established church at home. I then simply opened my situation in the Wesleian connexion, as I have stated it to you, sir, above. I enlarged on the earnest desire I had of closing my life in India, observing that if his

Royal Highness the Prince Regent and the government should think proper to appoint me their Bishop in India, I should most cheerfully and most gratefully accept of the offer. I am sorry I have lost the copy of the letter. In my letter to Lord Liverpool, I observed, that I should, in case of my appointment to the Episcopacy of India, return most fully and faithfully into the bosom of the established church, and do every thing in my power to promote its interests, and would submit to all such restrictions in the fulfilment of my office, as the government and the bench of bishops at home should think necessary — that my prime motive was to be useful to the Europeans in India; and that my second (though not the least) was to introduce the Christian religion among the Hindoos by the preaching of the Gospel, and perhaps also, by the establishment of schools.

I have not, sir, received an answer. Did I think that the answer was withheld, because Lord Liverpool considered me as acting very improperly by making the request, I should take no further step in the business. This may be the case; but his Lordship's silence may arise from other motives: on the one hand, because he did not choose to send me an absolute refusal; and, on the other hand, because he did not see it proper, at least just now, to give me any encouragement. When I was in some doubt this morning whether I ought to take the liberty of writing to you, my mind became determined on my being informed about three hours ago, that in a letter received from you by Mr. Hey, you observed that the generality of the House of Commons were set against granting any thing of an imperative kind to the

Dissenters or Methodists in favour of sending missionaries to India. Probably I may err in respect to the exact words which you used.

I am not conscious, my dear respected sir, that the least degree of ambition influences me in this business. I possess a fortune of about 1200*l.* a year, which is sufficient to bear my travelling expenses, and to enable me to make many charitable donations. I have lost two dear wives, and am now a widower. Our leading friends through the connexion receive me and treat me with the utmost respect and hospitality. I am quite surrounded with friends who greatly love me; but India still cleaves to my heart. I sincerely believe that my strong inclinations to spend the remainder of my life in India originates in the Divine Will, whilst I am called upon to use the secondary means to obtain the end.

I have formed an intimate acquaintance with Dr. Buchanan, and have written to him to inform him that I shall make him a visit within a few days, if it be convenient. From his house I intend, *Deo volente*, to return to Leeds for a day, and then to set off next week for London. The latter end of last November I visited him before, at Moat Hall, his place of residence, and a most pleasant visit it was to me, and also to him I have reason to think. He has been, since I saw him, drinking of the same bitter cup of which I have been drinking, by the loss of a beloved wife.

I would just observe, sir, that a hot climate peculiarly agrees with me. I was never better in my life than in the West Indies, during the four visits I made to that archipelago, and should now prefer the torrid zone, as

a climate, to any other part of the world. Indeed, I enjoy in this country, though sixty-five years of age, such an uninterrupted flow of health and strength as astonishes all my acquaintance. They commonly observe that they have perceived no difference in me for these last twenty years.

I would observe, sir, as I did at the commencement of my letter, that I throw myself on your candour, piety, and honour. If I do not succeed in my views of India, and it were known among the preachers that I had been taking the steps I am now taking, (though from a persuasion that I am in the Divine Will in so doing,) it might more or less affect my usefulness in the vineyard of my Lord, and that would very much afflict me. And yet, notwithstanding this, I cannot satisfy myself without making some advances in the business.

I consider, sir, your brother-in-law, Mr. Stephen, to be a man of eminent worth. I have a very high esteem for him. I know that his yea is yea, and what he promises he certainly will perform. Without some promise of confidence he might (if he were acquainted with the present business) mention it to Mr. ——, with whom, I know, Mr. Stephen is acquainted. If Mr. —— were acquainted with the steps I am taking, he would, I am nearly sure, call immediately a meeting of our committee of privileges, and the consequence might be unfavourable to my influence, and consequently to my usefulness among the Methodists. But my mind must be eased. I must venture this letter, and leave the whole to God, and under Him, sir, to you.

I have reason to believe that Lord Eldon had (indeed

I am sure of it), and probably now has, an esteem for me. Lord Sidmouth, I do think, loves me. Lord Castlereagh once expressed to Mr. Alexander Knox, then his private secretary in Ireland, his very high regard for me: since that time I have had one interview with his lordship in London. I have been favoured on various occasions with public and private interviews with Lord Bathurst. I shall be glad to have your advice whether I should write letters to those noblemen, particularly to the two first, on the present subject; or whether I had not better suspend every thing, and have the pleasure of seeing you in London. I hope I shall have that honour. I shall be glad to receive three or four lines from you (don't write unless you think it may be of some immediate importance), signifying that I may wait on you immediately on my arrival in London.

I have the honour to be,
With very high respect,
My dear Sir,
Your very much obliged, very humble,
and very faithful servant,
T. Coke.

REV. DR. BUCHANAN TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Kirby Hall, May 17, 1813.

My dear Sir,

I have just received a letter from Mr. R. M. Bird of Calcutta, a copy of which, he says, he has

sent you. I enclose a printed document of "the women burned in May and June last, on both sides of Calcutta from Cossumbuzar to the mouth of the Hoogly river." Mr. B. says it was printed by the missionaries at Serampore. You may therefore make immediate use of it by inserting it in the public papers, and in the "Christian Observer" of this month.

I lament to hear of Sabat's disappointing our hopes after so long a trial. But God, I doubt not, will bring good out of the evil.

I rejoice to see your labours in the new cause so wonderfully successful. Religious Britain has lifted up her voice. She has given glory to God; and I am not anxious about the event of the parliamentary discussion.

I am, dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours,

C. BUCHANAN.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY.

Kensington Gore, Wednesday, May 26, 1813.

My dear Lord Wellesley,

After assuring you that it has given me pleasure to hear of your amended health, allow me to beg the favour of you to give me, or kindly inform me how I can procure, your letter concerning the Calcutta College. You were so good, I think, long ago as to give me a copy of it; but though my old stores have been dili-

gently ransacked, it cannot be found; and as the East Indian question is coming on so soon, I greatly wish to see it. I shall be extremely glad if I can be at all useful in promoting the restoration of the college to its old, and I must think necessary, splendour.

Permit me to trouble your Lordship on one more topic. The widow of Mr. Brown of Calcutta, with her eight children all unprovided for, is come over to this country. I find her late husband, had he lived, or rather I believe, had his provostship lasted only about half a year longer, would have been entitled to half pay for life, I rather think to half or one third of his former salary. When you honoured him with the appointment to the office of provost of the college, he gave up 700*l.* per annum, arising from the discharge of his ordinary professional duties; and he could not recover this income when his office of provost was suppressed. This consideration surely strengthens his claim, while it does away the fear which might otherwise oppose Mrs. Brown's being liberally recompensed, that it might set a dangerous precedent. If you can serve this desolate family, I am sure it will give your Lordship pleasure; and I am always, with great respect and regard,

My dear Lord Wellesley,

Your Lordship's very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I am told that Mrs. Brown's case will be decided soon, so that no time should be lost in countenancing her.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

No. 1. Poet's Corner, Westminster,
May 28, 1813.

Sir,

I trust you will excuse my taking the liberty of requesting you to inform me, where the fact concerning Albuquerque's being thanked by the widows of Hindostan, for saving them from the flames, is to be found. It is mentioned in an article on the Baptist Missionary Reports, and in the first number of the "Quarterly Review," which article is commonly ascribed to you.

May I take the further liberty of stating that you would oblige me greatly, and (what I doubt not would be a far more powerful motive) you would, I hope, render some service to the cause of East Indian civilisation, if you could communicate to me any other facts or suggestions which tend to prove either the duty (duty includes humanity), practicability, or policy of endeavouring (of course by persuasion only) to christianise the natives of Hindostan. I mean, in addition to what are contained in the article above mentioned. Though of necessity I am scribbling in the utmost extremity of haste (you will forgive the effects of it), I cannot conclude without expressing how much I owe you for the various writings with which you have favoured the present age; and I must add, that I have felt a ready-made friendship for you, ever since I knew the anecdote of your kindness in fostering and soothing the wounded spirit and infant efforts of that most interesting of creatures, Kirk White, of whom it was my

misfortune to know little more than his name* till I read your beautiful life of him.

I remain,

With cordial respect and regard,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P.S. I have long had it in my mind to write to you, but the consciousness that I was taking perhaps an unwarrantable liberty has kept me silent, till it is perhaps too late to answer my purpose to speak at all.

Such is the too common issue of procrastination.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

London, July 5, 1813.

Dear Sir,

I have been very unjust to myself in so long delaying to return you, as I now do, my best thanks for your obliging, and I can truly assure you, most gratifying letter. My dilatoriness might convey a very erroneous notion of the feelings it called forth; for though that vexatious succession of petty interruptions, of which in your country residence you happily know nothing, has concurred with serious business and domestic occupations in keeping me silent, I have quite longed, ever

* But vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. v. p. 298.

since I heard from you, to assure you that the sort of right you give me, to avail myself of any opportunity which I may hereafter enjoy, of cultivating your acquaintance and friendship, presents to my mind a prospect on which I reflect with no little pleasure. I must add that the idea of meeting you at the Lakes, of which from my early youth I have been a passionate lover, to use the common phrase, renders the picture still more gratifying to me. This, however, is a pleasure which I cannot very soon enjoy; but a very dear and highly valued friend of mine is likely to visit the Lakes this very summer or perhaps autumn, and if you will allow me to introduce him to you, you will oblige both myself and him. His name is Bowdler; he had entered into the profession of the law, and though there perhaps scarcely ever was a man, the delicacy of whose mind rendered the coarseness and roughness of the practice of the legal profession more uncongenial and less palatable to him, he was advancing, on his very first entrance into it, with a most unusual pace, when his declining health compelled him to quit England for a year or two. He is now so far recovered as to talk of returning to the exercise of his profession in the autumn. In the meantime he is to spend some months in the north; and his head-quarters being in Yorkshire, he means to profit, from his vicinity to the Lakes, to visit that British paradise.

I am aware that if you were to open your doors to all lakers, you would, during the summer, have little else to do, and therefore that it may be necessary for you to make rules on this head, and to rigidly adhere to them.

But if you can, without impropriety, suffer my friend to spend a few hours in your society, I think you will not afterwards deem your time to have been thrown away. I ought, I think, to mention that he knows not of my asking for him the privilege of your acquaintance; but, knowing well his attachment to the poetical works of Mr. Southey (and more especially that he has joined with me in tasting and praising the moral sublimity, of which we find so little in any other of our modern poets), I cannot doubt his gladly welcoming the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the man.

I must break off, apologising for this most hasty scrawl. You will, I trust, excuse all its defects, and allow me to subscribe myself, as I very truly can, with esteem and attachment,

My dear sir,

Very sincerely yours,

W. Wilberforce.

P.S. After a hard struggle, of the particulars of which (as usual, so far as I am a party concerned) the newspaper reporters give a very scanty and inaccurate account, we have thus far carried our proposition for enlightening and Christianising India. I brought your kind contingent into the field in one of our party conflicts.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD TEIGNMOUTH.

Sandgate, Saturday evening,
August 21, 1813.

My dear Lord T.

For some time before I left London it had been almost my daily intention to call in Portman Square, to receive a more particular account of your own state and that of your family. At last, however, I was obliged, unless I could be content to let my family go without me, to cut my cable and slip out to sea, leaving various matters unsettled. I brought down with me a number of unanswered letters, intending before I should set to any other work to clear away this epistolary arrear. But I have been wishing to execute another project, which, however, I have delayed so long as to have outstaid my market. Both Mr. Grant and I have been afraid lest the Anglo-Indians, who are among the most intelligent members of the higher circles, should be able to produce an impression, that we carried our point in the House of Commons by availing ourselves of a popular delusion, contrary to truth and reason. To provide against this, it is to be wished that the public mind could be in some degree instructed. I have had an idea, as one expedient for that purpose, to publish what I should call the substance of my two speeches in the House of Commons, chiefly as the pegs (to use an old saying concerning the text of the Pursuits of Literature) on which to hang up the various authorities and statements by which we establish our side of the ques-

tion. But, as I have said, I shrink from the task, from a consciousness, besides all other objections, that I am too late. I believe I shall draw up a part, and see how I like it, though the beginning I have already made convinces me that any speech, thus coldly dictated, from imperfect (very imperfect) recollection, must want any spirit or fire which it might have derived from figurative incidents and allusions. Buchanan, I hear, has published a new book, but I have not seen it; how much the mind in him predominates over the matter with which it is associated.

I have been running over a very interesting little work, "Southey's Life of Lord Nelson." It has raised him greatly in my estimation, yet he affords examples of what is to be avoided, as well as of that which is to be pursued. What a course was his! and yet St. Paul's was really little if at all less laborious or dangerous; and instead of coronets and pensions he met only with reproach and poverty. I have often thought that nothing shows more strongly the perverseness of man, where religion is concerned, than the inadequate sense which is commonly entertained of that apostle's heroic zeal and perseverance. But I am reminded that it is time to collect our family to evening prayers. I have been employing the interval between it and that of my return from an evening walk, in answering your friendly letter, and must now say good night. You sometimes take a stroll; I wish you would direct your steed this way. Even a few days' quiet intercourse at such a place as this, whether climbing the hills or strolling along the beach, would be worth as many years in London, for the friendly interchange of

thoughts and feelings. In one particular, this place and neighbourhood have much improved since last year, — and that partly I hope from my expostulations, — in having schools set up in the two towns adjoining, and in Sandgate and its interior village itself. What mercies do we enjoy in this land of peace and liberty; like a little St. Helena, in the midst of a roaring ocean on all sides, we hear all around us the miseries of war, to which by the way we have become sadly too much habituated, while we go in and out in security, and eat and drink under our own roofs, if not under our vines and fig-trees, without a fear for our wives and children. Never surely was there so highly favoured a country as this — above all, our spiritual privileges.

I have been running through Adam Clarke's Commentary on Saint Matthew; there is some very forcible practical matter, and some curious information, but surely a strange *farrago* of out of the way learning, which does not suit the feelings of any one who would read the Scripture devotionally. Have you received safely the manuscript on Providence *, which you were so kind as to lend me? May such sentiments as it contains be ever my own. But my paper reminds me that I must say farewell — rather adieu; begging my own and Mrs. Wilberforce's best remembrances to Lady T. and Miss S., and assuring you that I am,

My dear Lord T.,

Ever sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

* Published in 1834.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Sandgate, near Folkstone, September 2, 1813.

My dear Muncaster,

Surely since 1788, when no less than five and twenty years and a half ago you watched over me with the tenderness of a parent, and first gave me those proofs of friendly attention, which on all suitable occasions you have ever since displayed, there never was an interval wherein so little intercourse has taken place between us as for the last six or seven months. I will not deny that this has given me real concern; though, so far as our personal intercourse was in question, it was prevented by circumstances which I could not control; and from the time of your leaving the great city till now, and, indeed, at this very moment, I have been, and am so much occupied, partly, not to say principally, by my children, as to have been forced to beg a vote of credit from all my correspondents. You can scarcely conceive how incessantly I was engaged on the subject of the renewal of the East Indian Charter, especially in that resolution and clause which respected the communication of Christian light and moral improvement to our East Indian fellow-subjects; and I am persuaded that we have, by our success in that instance, laid the foundation stone of the grandest edifice that ever was raised in Asia. It too often happens, my dear Muncaster, in the case of our parliamentary concerns, that though we may do what we conceive to be for the best, the consequences of our measure may prove very different from those which we had anticipated from it; and it often happens,

too, — and we had an instance of it, I willingly acknowledge, in the last session, — that at the very time that we pursue the course which we believe to be right, we cannot feel quite comfortable in pursuing it, because we see so many whose judgment and principles we highly respect taking the directly opposite one; but where our cause is such an one as that of the Abolition of the slave trade, or the introduction of Christian light and moral improvement into India, by such means as sober reason and experience sanction and approve, we may proceed with confidence.

I suppose you are now in the old castle, with all well, I hope, around you. I am come to the same place in which I was last year: like all other human situations and things, it has its good and its bad properties: its best is, that it is a very quiet place, where we may live just as we please, and see a good deal of each other under the same roof, by seeing scarcely any one else; and as I can associate so little with my wife and children during the session, it is no more than fair that they should have the larger measure of my society after it is ended. What think you of the political prospects that are opening on us? I own I dare not be sanguine, remembering how often we have been disappointed in the result of former coalitions. There are, however, several circumstances which distinguish the present times, and which tend to raise my hopes for our country. There is a marked improvement in the general character of our clergy, and I cannot but say, that there is less open profligacy among our leading public men than there too often was formerly. The race of buck parsons

is nearly extinct; still, I cannot deny that there are other circumstances of not so pleasant a kind: however, my dear Muncaster, neither your race nor mine can be much longer *, for I reckon myself much older in constitution than in years. May we both be prepared for the close of it — all else is comparatively insignificant; though such is the practical folly of men, and too often of men very wise in the concerns of this life, that they go on neglecting those very interests which they themselves would acknowledge to be of supreme importance; and more especially neglecting that very book which they profess to believe contains their sailing instructions, if I may so term them, through the stormy ocean of this life to the haven of security and rest, when, also, the alternative of that haven is —— But I must break off. Let me know, my dear Muncaster, how you and Lord and Lady Lindsay and their little one are; and believe me, with every good wish for your temporal and eternal happiness,

Yours, most sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO SAMUEL ROBERTS, ESQ.

London, December 31, 1813.

My dear Sir,

Did you but see the list of my unanswered correspondents, you would own that my sending back even

* This letter was written within a week of Lord Muncaster's death. *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. i. p. 145.

three hasty lines in return for your kind letter was a friendly attention. I say friendly, not polite, because as the school boys phrase it, (a natural simile for a father in the Christmas holidays) we I trust have got out of the chapter of civility and have entered on that of friendship.

You wish me to take up the lottery!!! Why, I have been pleading that cause for the last twenty years. I think I never saw Mr. Perceval so near out of temper with me as when I pressed him on that subject. Mr. Whitbread at the same time made (a somewhat strange tune for such an instrument) even a pathetic speech against it; and observe that Mr. Perceval did introduce, strengthened by Vansittart, some improvements which have very greatly lessened the evils. Still I quite agree with you — the thing is wrong in principle: and it is scarcely too strong, considering its formerly not rare effects (I allude to the suicides committed), to say in this case as in another noted instance, 'it is not lawful to put the money into the treasury because it is the price of blood.' But I must break off — and say farewell — only remarking that I infer from your language that you did not receive from me a copy of the speech. Your name I was sure was in the list, and I find it is so on consulting it. The copy must have been detained somewhere.

Farewell, and believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours ever most truly,

W. WILBERFORCE.

As for my not mentioning Dr. Buchanan, you don't take into account the really determining motive — that I considered the issue very doubtful, and that I was not

at liberty, even out of friendship much less out of civility, to incur the risk of losing a single vote. If you knew the House of Commons and its prejudices as well as I do, I am persuaded you would think differently on that point.

SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Docketted: Sir James Mackintosh, suggesting Address respecting Abolition of Slave Trade.]

Mickleham, near Dorking, April 13, 1814.

Dear Sir,

You have so long been engaged in leading or co-operating with officious associates in great undertakings, that you have learnt to forgive the suggestions of their unseasonable or ill advised zeal. On this ground I hope for pardon when I mention that the approaching reconciliation of all European nations appears to me a fit occasion for trying a great exertion for the universal Abolition of the Slave Trade.

An address to the Regent to employ the effectual good offices of his ministers to obtain this object, would not I should hope be resisted here, and might be productive of benefits abroad.

The eyes of all mankind would naturally be turned towards you on such an occasion. I hope that no circumstance can hinder you from moving such an address. I have no qualification but zeal for the honour of seconding the motion, and I shall most gladly resign it to any

other person whom you may think likely to be more useful.

I should be extremely obliged by learning your sentiments on this suggestion while I am at this place, which I shall not leave till early on Monday morning.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours most respectfully,

J. MACKINTOSH.

MR. JOSEPH LANCASTER TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Elliott's Row, near West Square,
Lambeth Road, Southwark,
4th Month 15, 1814.

My kind Friend,

I have known so much of thy kindness in times past, that I venture to address a few lines to thee on two subjects, the last of which is of peculiar importance, and to it I shall beg thy especial attention.

The first is, that by a series of oppressions I have been made a bankrupt, and involved in utter ruin. I have committed some errors and oversights by putting false confidence in great professions, and my remuneration for large sums of my own disbursed for the public good, has evaporated in a trifle of which more than one third is unpaid.

For myself I could bear this, but I have had to support my father,. and my poor wife has been greatly depressed by events so utterly unexpected. For her sake it is, more than my own, that I take the liberty

of making a private application for the small sum of five pounds. If we can succeed in raising about one hundred pounds among a few private friends, it will render us much more happy than perhaps we should have been if we had never known the purifying hand of affliction. I hope at least that the application I am making will not be taken amiss, and that thou wilt cheerfully render me such small assistance as may be most proper.

The second point is the most important; it is one I beg may be confidential. It fills me with awe and dread for the system I have matured — for the perpetuation of all the good I have done and for the great cause of education, the basis of which is and ought ever to be the instruction of youth in the sacred writings.

The Westminster (Lancasterian) schools committee have been convened without my responsibility. The present members met first at the house of ——, by his invitation some months ago. They consist of a few good men, chiefly dissenters, and of a number of leading members of the London corresponding societies, &c., and some of them seem to have sworn on the altar of Belial eternal enmity to the religion of Jesus. They have made an attempt already to extirpate the sacred volume out of all their proposed schools. They have been defeated, but the attempt has been shamefully screened and hushed up. I think it my duty as founder of the system to alarm the nation on the subject. It seems to me my Christian duty. Their language has been fit for the attendants of the beast who bore the name of blasphemy.

The party are, I believe, connected with Sir Francis Burdett's election plans. Now I am grieved to see the unwise and heady movements of ——, in letting the system get into the hands of such a party. Electioneering purposes must be the unavoidable end.

I cannot conceal from myself the most painful fact, that all the leading persons in the Borough Road Institution, &c., are now intimately connected and associated with a set of infidels. They find them men of energy and reason, and business, and they think to make tools of these instruments. But so far from that, I can plainly see that the others are making dupes of them, instead of becoming their tools. These men, of weak heads but good hearts, are misled to endanger the plan they profess to befriend.

The outline I have given is but brief; the events and facts are to me clear as day. I am sometimes inclined to come out and be separate, for a believer hath no part with an infidel, and though we may in Christian tenderness, bear these men in private society, yet no man who wishes to be an Israelite indeed, can possibly make friendship or join hands with a Goliah, while defying the armies of the living God.

I beg these things may be received in confidence. My mind seems nearly made up, and my way clear; yet I do well to take advice where so great an interest is at stake. The favour of thy early answer will much oblige thy respectful friend,

JOSEPH LANCASTER.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

London, April 1, 1814.

My dear Friend,

I have been very dilatory, but not without a tolerable excuse, if not a full justification. I received the 10*l.* duly, but did not send it, because I knew from Scott himself, that, to the honour of the religious world, he had been so liberally supplied, chiefly without any solicitation, as to have no feelings in his mind but self-reproach for having ever distrusted the good providence of God; and, secondly, an *embarras des richesses* (not that these were his own words — no confidence in any one's veracity would entitle him to be believed, if he should report that old Scott had thus expressed himself, but such was the meaning of what he himself stated), together with a fear lest he should grow too fond of money from, for the first time in his life, having more than he had occasion for. If I mistake not, 1300*l.* or 1400*l.* were raised, or are made up, by books sold, &c. Now, in times like these, when whatever is granted to one is withheld from another, it really seemed wrong to execute the commission without taking your judgment enlightened by these new facts. I shall, however, tell Scott of your intention when I next see him. I am half inclined to ask you to let me give half of your bounty to a very deserving woman, a widow (Scotch), with four or five children, whose husband was a sort of engineer, receiving 300*l.* or 400*l.* per annum salary. One of her girls, about twelve, had got a place, as she herself (the mother I mean) told me, with a very pretty-looking

young woman, who came to her house; but sir, she added, and burst into tears, she is at home again. They spent all Sunday in playing at cards; taught her bad words — I found this young lady was a player. The remaining 5*l*., or the whole, I will return, or apply as you shall direct it to be used. I must break off — farewell.

Ever your affectionate friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JOHN BOWDLER, JUN. ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Hayes, May 17, 1814.

My dear Sir,

I am doubly in your debt, for, sad to say, I have never returned Mr. D. Stewart's last letter which you were so kind as to send me. I wished to add a few lines, and what with the hurry or the pain of leaving a place where I had passed seven months, what with the fatigue of a little imprudent over-exertion, I did not find an opportunity of writing from Widley. I have since been in town for one night, but I was called up by business with Sir S. Lawrence, and did not intend to have seen any person, though I was unexpectedly enabled to spend half an hour in Palace Yard. I shall be truly happy when it is in my power to see you, more especially if it can be by spending a night or two at Kensington Gore; yet I do assure you your kindness in saying that you will not in any manner misconstrue my non-appearance, if it should so happen, is a relief to my mind; for it

would give me great pain if I doubted for a moment of your unabated cordiality and affection. The truth is, I am not strong, and I am surrounded with distractions, all of so petty a nature, that they only harass without arousing the mind, like flies buzzing in all directions about one. Here for a moment I am in repose, and from this retreat look at the world from which I have long been secluded, and on which I am about to enter again, not without trepidation. Alas, alas! it is a rough and stormy océan; and in good truth my bark is but a slight one. The more I see and feel, the more I am astonished how men, who do not look to God for protection and support, can bear up at all amidst the contending elements in this dark region. But we know that "all things shall work together for good to them that love God;" and the true wisdom, therefore, must be to labour to secure that which will bear with it, in some form or other, every necessary blessing.

I am sincerely obliged to you for your kind invitation to Sandgate; but I am bound this summer to redeem a pledge made long since of going to Studley, in order to cast an eye on the state of Miss Lawrence's affairs in those quarters. Being so far north, I shall probably go on a little further, and ramble a little about the lakes in Cumberland, and

> "Where Ettrick winds its way to Tweed,
> Unlike the tide of human time," &c.

— one of the most beautiful and most melancholy passages in poetry. How glad should I be to have you to enjoy and help me to enjoy the delicious scenery of Cumberland!

I am not amiss in point of health, but my strength is not great, nor my spirits very buoyant. Pray make my kindest regards to Mrs. Wilberforce, accept my best thanks for the enclosed, and all your kindness respecting it, and believe me,

Very gratefully and affectionately, yours,

J. B., Jun.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO WILLIAM HEY, ESQ.

Near London, May 13, 1814.

My dear Friend,

Value as you ought, and be thankful for your power of going on with little sleep, as well as your excellent method of economising in the expenditure of your time. I fear I must acknowledge as much inferiority in the latter instance, as from my bodily infirmities in the former. I am quite overloaded with business of various kinds, and perhaps I am doing wrong in now writing to you, to the neglect of a more pressing call, but I will be short.

Lord Sidmouth assured me he was considering what remedy to apply to the dreadful evils mentioned by Mr. Nixon.

It is now several years since Mr. Todd Naylor wrote to me from Rio Janeiro; and I spoke more than once to the successive secretaries of state (Mr. Canning, &c.) urging on them the importance, and even necessity of

a chaplain, and of divine worship for Protestants, &c. at Rio. The whole difficulty *then* consisted in the payment of the expenses. At Lisbon the factory was used to support the ecclesiastical establishment; and I was assured that the matter should be considered, and the merchants be consulted through our consul at Rio, and desired to settle some permanent dues, probably in the way of duties on exports or imports, which should be appropriated to that use. I will name it at the Secretary of State's office, and also to the Archbishop of Canterbury, if I can, to-morrow, as I mean, D. V., to dine at Lambeth; but do you also name it to your friend, and urge on him the importance of promoting among the merchants, and other English at Rio, a disposition to support the chaplaincy in whole or in part. The Roman Catholics cry shame on us; our not having a clergyman, even to bury the dead, is thought shocking, and we are deemed almost a Pagan nation, altogether insensible to religion.

I quite rejoiced at your Abolition clause in the address; such a clause was unanimously assented to in an address of a public meeting at Liverpool. I quite rejoice also in the idea of having your prayers. O, my dear sir, what an unspeakable blessing it is to know that we serve a master so ready to bear with our infirmities, and forgive our sins, negligences, and ignorances. I little thought when I began of saying more than three words about the Rio chaplain, and adding that I am ever,

Your sincere friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

I sent your inclosure to Macaulay. I hear rather favourable accounts from Paris about the disposition of people in high stations towards the Abolition; but the mercantile world are intent on gain, the profligacy of manners and morals great, and even the manners become rough, &c.

I have ideas of endeavouring to get up benevolent institutions, and I hope Bible societies, in some of the great towns in France.

PRINCE TALLEYRAND TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Juin 1, 1814.

Monsieur,

Je vous dois des remerciments pour l'obligeance extrême avec laquelle vous m'avez communiqué* vos craintes sur le parti que prendra la France relativement à la traite des nègres. Vous m'avez tout-à-fait rendu justice en pensant que je lirais avec grand intérêt les vues d'un homme déjà si justement célèbre à tant de titres, et qui a rendu son nom à jamais illustre par sa persévérance à poursuivre l'abolition d'un commerce aussi contraire aux règles d'une saine politique qu'aux lois de l'humanité.

Je ne pouvais ignorer sans doute, Monsieur, l'histoire de cette grande question politique, agitée si longtemps et avec tant d'éclat dans le parlément d'Angleterre; mais votre lettre est venue y ajouter un nouvel intérêt par la

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iv. p. 189.

justesse de vos observations, et par la chaleur même que vous mettez à les faire prévaloir, et à les appliquer à la conjoncture actuelle. Cette, lettre, Monsieur, a été pour moi l'occasion de renouveller toute mon admiration pour un pays dans lequel les plus grands hommes d'état non seulement conçoivent les projets les plus utiles au monde, mais en poursuivent l'éxécution avec cette prudence, cette sagesse, et cette persévérance qui en assurent le succès. Le courage qui donne la patience de mûrir un plan, et d'en attendre l'application, est souvent plus difficile que celui qui fait briser tout les obstacles. Combien est heureuse l'Angleterre de posséder des hommes qui savent mettre vingt ans à établir une belle institution ! La méthode des mesures violentes et precipitées a failli perdre la France; elle pouvait perdre l'Europe.

En voyant les folies que nous faisions de ce côté de la Manche, j'ai souvent tremblé pour la civilisation Européenne. Je me rassurais en contemplant la sagesse, la raison, la prudence, et les lumières de vos hommes d'état. Ces réflexions me ramènent actuellement à la question qui vous intéresse, et qui est véritablement la votre, puisque vous avez eu la gloire de la proposer le premier à la Grande Bretagne.

Le traité de paix qui vient d'être conclu vous prouvera que les vues du Roi ne s'écartent point des votres a cet égard. Ce Prince éclairé a le désir de voir abolir la traite des nègres; mais il a pensé, comme le gouvernement Anglais, que cette mesure ne pouvait s'opérer qu'avec précaution. La France n'était point preparée sur ce sujet comme l'Angleterre. Cinq années

nous suffiront pour parvenir au but que vous désirez atteindre.

J'aime à croire, et je suis heureux de penser, que désormais nos deux gouvernements s'entendront pour les grandes vues d'humanité ou d'utilité publique qui naîtraient sur l'une ou l'autre rive de la Manche. Nous avons à présent tant de raisons d'être unis, que cette disposition mutuelle ne peut que resserrer les liens des deux pays. Ce vœu si ardent que je formais depuis longtemps pour la prospérité de nos deux pays, vient de se réaliser par le traité de paix que vient d'être conclu.

Agréez, je vous prie, l'assurance de ma considération la plus distinguée, et des sentimens particuliers, avec lesquels j'ai l'honneur d'être,

Monsieur,

Votre très humble et très

Obéissant serviteur,

LE PRINCE DE BENEVENT.

MONSIEUR LA FAYETTE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Paris, Juin 8, 1814.

Monsieur,

Mon ami Alexandre de Humboldt, connaissant mes obligations envers vous, et mon vieux dévouement à la cause dont vous avez été l'heureux défenseur, a pensé que j'avais quelques droits pour lui donner une lettre d'introduction dont il sent tout le prix. Je saisis

moimême avec l'empressement l'occasion de vous offrir le double hommage de reconnaissance que vous doit un ennemi de l'esclavage et un ancien prisonnier d' Olmutz. Le nom de M. de Humboldt est trop célèbre pour y rien ajouter : je me permettrai pourtant de dire que le plus infatigable courage dans la recherche, et le génie le plus extraordinaire pour l'acquisition de tout ce qui est à la portée de l'esprit humain, sont en lui des qualités moins éminentes encore que celles de son cœur. Vous jugerez, combien il a joui de vos succès philantropiques, et combien il souhaite les voir complètes sans restriction ni retard. Agréez, Monsieur, tous mes vœux, ma haute considération, et mon reconnaissant attachement.

LA FAYETTE.

HENRY BROUGHAM, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Temple, Tuesday.

My dear Friend,

You may easily believe I have thought of nothing but the treaty for two days past, and have each moment found out new cause of vexation and indignation. A fine return truly, and a pure sense of the benefits they have received, those base Bourbons are evincing !

As for Alexander and the other allies, they may cheaply enough be abolitionists, having not one negro, — as I doubt not the Bourbons are all for abolishing

villenage. This liberality at other people's expence is, I believe, the whole amount of the magnanimity we hear so much of. However we must try even such means rather than despair; and we ought to think betimes how to set about it. A strong expression of the sense of parliament on this unexampled atrocity is the best means; and while the allies are here — if possible while they are present. Public meetings and addresses are another. I have set the City men upon inserting a great deal to this effect in their address, and should hope it may go round. Lord Grenville should do so at Oxford; the Duke of Gloucester at Cambridge, if they go there.

But in truth one is disheartened and sick of men, and above all of rulers. Any thing so cold-blooded and base never could have been perpetrated but by French politicians of the worst school.

I inclose Dumont's letter, just received, and am

Yours most truly,

H. BROUGHAM.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO Z. MACAULAY, ESQ.

Sandgate, August 9, 1814.

My dear Macaulay,

(Dinner on table.) Before I express the delight with which I have read your most interesting letter, — a letter which I cannot better describe than (forgetting

for a moment to whom I am writing) by saying that it is Macaulay all over, — let me state to you the astonishment with which I read your account of ———'s having told you that, on the whole, I was favourable to his going to Vienna. He conversed with me on the subject at Kensington Gore on two successive Sundays; and though I saw plainly that he wished much to go, I distinctly stated to him my conviction that it would be injurious; though by the way he expressly declared that he meant to go only as a private English gentleman who had a right to go where he would without control, &c. I remember that, to soften the harshness of my opinion, I stated to him my having relinquished the idea of going to Paris myself, on the ground of its weakening Lord Castlereagh's responsibility.

I have put my sentiments, however, now beyond all doubt, by writing to him my opinion in the plainest terms, and stating, that even if Lord Castlereagh should consent to his going, and say that he should not regard it as indicating suspicion of his own intelligence, activity, zeal, &c., yet that this would not remove my objection. But enough of this. You surely agree with me, and strongly. You really have raised my spirits more by the account of your interview* with the Duke of Wellington than I can tell you.

I must break off.

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P.S. S. asks me about ——'s going to Paris. Of

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iv. p. 211.

the two I say that would be the worst on every ground. There Gregoire, La Fayette, et hoc genus omne would have access to him.

JOHN BOWDLER, ESQ. JUN., TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Studley, August 31.

My dear Sir,

Your kind letter reached me here a few days since, and I am really obliged to you for not worrying yourself to write down places and views at the Lakes. It was very inconsiderate and foolish of me to ask it, when I might have known that a few shillings would purchase me the whole history. I was, indeed, very unwell when I left London; but it will give you pleasure to know that I have recovered very rapidly since I arrived here, and am now (allowing for some occasional cough and tenderness of the chest) very tolerably well for me. Cold air and quiet are my panaceas, — heat and hurry my worst enemies. This is not a convenient arrangement for a lawyer; but "all is in His hands," and I must try a winter campaign in London. I shall not attempt going into the courts at present, or speaking in public. Business in my own chambers (and I have got very airy ones) I can do without hurt.

I do not know if you heard of our visit at Brampton. The party was Lord Calthorpe, Charles Grant, Fazakerley, and myself. Need I say that, with Lady Olivia to enliven us, it was very delightful? Lord C. and I

stayed from Saturday to Friday. I cannot well describe Lord C.'s kindness; he called for me at Dealtry's, and took me in his carriage to Brampton: then (in spite of all remonstrances) he would carry me forty miles further on the north road, though quite out of his proper direction; and now, in about ten days, he is coming down to take me with him to the Lakes; I really believe almost entirely because he thinks it will be more comfortable for me to go with him. I do not forget that it is to you I owe the blessing of his friendship, and believe me it is among those things for which I feel most thankful to the Giver of all good gifts. We have hopes that C. Grant will join us at the Lakes. Will not that be a delightful party? I am quite sorry to hear that your London hurries pursue you even to Sandgate:

"They pierce my thicket, through my grot they glide."

If I could get any thing for you by wishing, I believe it would be the certainty of three months' repose during the summer, and the power of commanding it when necessary at K. Gore. I am much obliged to you for your introduction to Dr. Buchanan; but Kirby Hall is too distant from Studley. I did not forget your message to Miss Lawrence, who was pleased, and said you had been her play-fellow at Wimbleton, but she believed you had forgotten it. Pray remember me very kindly to Mrs. Wilberforce, and to all the young ones. I suppose little Kid capers about the cliffs as merrily as if they were Welsh mountains.

Your much obliged and affectionate friend,

J. Bowdler.

RT. HON. G. CANNING TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Gloucester Lodge, October 25, 1814.

My dear Wilberforce,

I have to thank you for both your letters — that to myself, (which I have shown and talked over with Liverpool, and should have been glad, had it so happened, that we could have talked with you together,) and the printed one to Talleyrand, which I put by to read on *my* middle passage. I am working hard to get off * on Saturday, but the carrying a family beyond sea is no trifling undertaking.

I ought not to omit to say, in reference to one part of your last letter, that I do not believe, nor does Liverpool, that Lord Strangford is unfriendly to the cause of Abolition, but that he really and *bonâ fide* has done all that could be done in so very unfavourable a position.

I need not assure you that I will not leave any thing unattempted, publicly or privately, to forward the great object; and I know no object of which it would make me happier or prouder to be able to aid the accomplishment. But I think we shall find that we must be contented to go gradually to work; and I am satisfied that rough measures and a tone of dictation would tend rather to alienate our ally altogether than to bring him over to our views. Recollect, that if France be not sincere, here is a point of union between her and the Peninsular powers.

* To Lisbon.

I am to see Souza, and have a talk with him to-morrow; but I fear he is not to be wrought upon to do much for us. I shall endeavour, at least, to get him to be quiet, and not counteract us.

Could my secret have been kept I should have been very desirous, indeed, to have had two or three months of perfect privacy and tranquillity before the arrival of the Prince; but it being once known what I was to be, there was no chance of peace for me in a private station; and therefore it is determined that I go out as ambassador.

Will you take the trouble to order a complete series of the Reports of the African Society to be sent to me? I have had them from time to time, but in my packings I have not been able to find a regular set. If they could be here by Friday it would do; or they can be sent after me.

Ever, my dear Wilberforce,
Sincerely and affectionately yours,
G. CANNING.

HENRY THORNTON, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

London, October 28, 1814.

My dear W.,

I have been almost ashamed of writing to you until I had read your book*, which I can assure you I much approve; and I give you my warmest congratu-

* Letter to Talleyrand on the Slave Trade.

lations on your being so far honoured by Providence as to be the means of disseminating thus widely over the globe principles of humanity, with some infusion of religion, and the spirit of true and practical freedom. I trust your work will soften down some of those feelings of national animosity of which I hear so much in many quarters. I doubt whether you are not a little too handsome (it being, indeed, politic to be handsome) towards the French people. But your translator, I conceive, has made you say more in French than you had said in English.

What say you to these American affairs? I grieve over the hard blows we are exchanging, and the permanent animosities which we are thus generating. It may be true that if we make war on a country whose government is so democratic, and whose territory is so extensive, it may be necessary to operate on the public mind by spreading our blows in some such manner as that in which we are bestowing them; but even then the destruction of all civil buildings seems questionable, and the policy of embarking any deeper in war at all when negotiators were assembling, and peace was the word through Europe, strikes me as too pugnacious, and as rather unchristian, not to mention the errors in particular expeditions. It seems as if in politics, as in private life, there must ever be some trouble. The next waves, I trust, will not be so high as the last; but there will, I suppose, be much rough work, especially in parliament.

Remember us kindly to Mrs. W.

Yours, ever affectionately,

H. Thornton.

PRINCE TALLEYRAND TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Vienne, Novembre 6, 1814.

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire le 19 du mois dernier. Vous savez quelle est mon opinion : il y a longtemps que je suis tout-à-fait convaincu, mais tout le monde ne l'est point ; et vous trouverez en France beaucoup d'adversaires, c'est-à-dire beaucoup de préjugés, à vaincre. Vous connaissez la nature des préjugés : ce n'est point en les heurtant qu'on peut en triompher. Il faut des ménagements. Il faut surtout de la patience et du temps. La publication de vos écrits en France ne peut produire que de très-bons effets. Pour moi, je n'y vois aucune difficulté, et je ne pense pas qu'elle puisse en éprouver. On ne peut pas douter que la vérité, dont vous êtes le zélé défenseur, ne soit un jour généralement reconnue. Je lirai avec plaisir tout ce que vous écrirez sur cet objet, et je fais des vœux bien sincères pour le succès de vos soins.

Je vous prie d'agréer, Monsieur, l'assurance de la haute considération avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être,

Votre très-humble et très-obéissant Serviteur,

LE PRINCE DE TALLEYRAND.

MRS. MARTHA MORE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Barley Wood, November 22, 1814.

My dear Sir,

With anxious impatience have I been watching for the moment, when by any accident I could discover from yourself that our last conversation, at Barley Wood, had not escaped your memory. Your kind little note has raised my spirits, by convincing me it is still in your thoughts, and the moment seems arrived when I may fully open my mind to you without intrusion; and in the fullest trust and confidence I begin my little tale.

It is almost forty years ago (for I was very young) that I began, by myself, to keep all her * letters to us of the literary anecdotes of the day. I have of course amassed a great deal. I have a very sensible confidential female friend, who writes very well. With my school and family cares, I wanted aid. I enlisted this lady, who is truth and secrecy itself. Soon after you left us; shut up in my little chamber we began our labours. I must now sketch to you what we did in about two months. A regular narrative of my sister's life, not forgetting the petty things of her childhood, including all the necessary circumstances of her life, to the day when she was first introduced to Mr. Garrick. We then make extracts from her own letters, which chiefly carry on her history for the next twelve or thirteen years; here you have the whole state of the Blue Stocking day. I have made a point to give accurately her play-going day: thank God, it was short. When she begins to shorten her London visits

* Mrs. Hannah More's.

—then the whole of the schools, clubs, &c. is brought forward, aided by a private journal of my own. We then take up the milkwoman, arrange all that pretty affair: I then plunge into the Rev. Mr. Bere's business, have gone through the whole of it, and brought the memoir down to the "Hints to a Princess." All her writings as they came out are regularly introduced in their places, with what was said of them at the time. The above is done in clean, plain, simple writing, with every date in its proper place — it fills many quires of paper. It is ready for whoever you may hereafter wish to be the editor. Much is yet to be done: on the last ten years of her life I have not yet touched. This includes "Cœlebs," "Practical Morals," "St. Paul." And now, my dear Sir, I have anxiously watched for the chance of your coming westward, but all in vain; and when I heard your family were in Kent, I gave up all hopes of seeing you this year, but your little note revived my hopes again. To read it to you a couple of hours at a time, would now be the greatest pleasure I could know in this world; for the heroine of our history, I think, will not be very long with us — not if I judge by her mind, for that certainly brightens.

I know I have taken up too much of such time as yours; but I know also your kindness to me the last twenty-five years; and that you have been so good, as indeed Bishop Porteus had done, as to touch upon this subject. I hear occasionally many are making memorandums, and getting ready her history the moment she departs. What impertinence! When you have read this, you will of course burn it; my sister does not know

I am writing, but she knows of your note, and says my head will be turned at having a secret with you. Of course I have told her the outline, and she laughs at my folly, but she shall not read my book.

Of course you will not take the trouble to answer this: I should be grieved if you supposed I could think of troubling you.

I remain, dear Sir, with every grateful feeling,
Your truly obliged,
MARTHA MORE.

I will scribble a line about my sister on a separate bit of paper.

SIR SIDNEY SMITH* TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Vienna, December 5, 1814.

My dear Sir,

I duly received your letters, and the packet of the printed ones for Prince Talleyrand, and have made good use of them. I cut the pamphlet open before giving it to him, to insure the better chance of his reading it, or, at least, his dipping oftener into it. He assured me, the next time we met, he had read it all, and that the arguments were so convincing to his mind that he would cause it to be reprinted and circulated in France, with a view to forming public opinion there on the same ground. He said it was eloquently drawn up;

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iv. p. 226.

that if France had had the same experience, or if she had not had the disadvantage of a want of intercourse with England (in a literary point of view), for twenty years, no doubt her feelings and opinions would be the same. At present, the feeling was that colonies were necessary to her, and an importation of slaves necessary to restore their cultivation; and that she could not be persuaded on a sudden, and would not be compelled, to forego that source of wealth and prosperity as a resource to restore herself to her position in Europe.

In answer to my reasoning, he said in admission thereof, "*La chose m'est démontré (à moi); il s'agit de la démontrer à la France;*" so much for the power of a wrong public opinion — would that a right one were formed, and were as powerful. On the subject of the white slave trade on the north coast of Africa, and the recent kidnapping of some poor cultivators from the coast between Nice and the Var, officially announced here, P. Talleyrand and others immediately revert to the old idea of driving the "Barbary powers back by European force, and colonising that coast." My idea is to bring the oppressed native African princes forward to drive the Turkish banditti home, requiring the Porte to recall them, or at any rate to deny their recruiting in Turkey, and disavow their piracy and political existence as independent states. I am at work towards this end, and thus ultimately to abolish the slave trade in Africa, but I am aground for want of money, and I have not any more inheritances to expend in the service of my country and mankind. Could you not get a couple of hundred pounds lodged at Coutts's in my name by the

African Institution or Association (both are equally interested) for this purpose?

I would give a regular, and I am confident a good account of the expenditure, and the result. My correspondence extends from Lebanon to Atlas. Trifling presents thus multiplied cost money, and I have no more to spare with justice to my family.

Yours, very truly,

W. S. SMITH.

LORD GRENVILLE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Dropmore, December 23, 1814.

My dear Sir,

It is most highly gratifying to me to know that you have read my speech with approbation. My only hope is that it may in some small degree serve to confirm and animate the sentiments which prevail here on the subject. Of its producing any effect in France I should utterly despair. I took steps for its reaching the king, because he, I really believe, is not callous to some of the feelings which I have attempted to awaken. His people, I fear, are utterly and almost universally incapable of being moved by any such considerations, not on this subject only, but on all others. I believe this to be true to an extent which positive information could alone have rendered credible, and which is matter of

most fearful reflection, when one considers how much the general tone and opinions of French society have always influenced those of the rest of the Continent, and even of this country.

I am assured that Sismondi's pamphlet, admirable as it is, has had no sale in Paris. I did not know that I had to thank you for it, as well as for the letter to Talleyrand, of which I ought not so long to have delayed the acknowledgment. I hope it is your intention to publish it here in English, and our language is now so familiarly read at Paris, that I should expect much more effect from it even there in its native garb, than in its foreign disguise.

I am, my dear Sir,
Most truly and faithfully yours,
GRENVILLE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO GENERAL MACAULAY.

Barham Court, near Maidstone,
Saturday night, January 7, 1815.

My dear General,

Before I proceed to the subject on which I have been for some time intending to trouble you, let me, while I recollect it, mention that which is brought to my mind by the copy of the Duke of Wellington's letter to you, for which I return you many thanks. I have long intended to take the first opportunity of inform-

ing you, that having occasion to write to the Duke of Wellington, and growing more and more uneasy concerning the publication * in the Bristol paper, I named to the Duke the whole affair exactly as it had taken place, before I received your letter. Finding your opinion the other way, and presuming it might in part be grounded on your knowledge of the man, I was sorry I had so done. However, no harm appears to have ensued, and the Duke, like a man of a large mind, forgets his own personal share in the business, as you must have remarked, and only seems alive to the possible effects on the cause. The circumstance, in that point of view, has given me real pleasure, as an indirect, and thereby the most powerful indication of the interest which the Duke of Wellington really takes in the success of his negotiation for Abolition. I do not, however, forget that it has been owing most likely to your kind and promised warning, and to the measures I immediately took in consequence of it, that the Bristol paragraph was not copied into the London newspapers, where it would have attracted much more notice.

But I have detained you much longer than I meant or expected on this topic; and having had very little time when I began at my own command, still less of course is left for mentioning to you the case of the family of one of the best of men, the late General Burn of the Marines, who died lately, leaving a widow and nine or ten children. The General was a Christian of many years standing, and they who saw him the most intimately, thought

* A paragraph, which it was feared might prejudice the negotiation at this time proceeding in France, on the subject of the Slave Trade.

of him the most favourably. I am not, I ought to tell you, merely a volunteer in this good cause; the General left behind him a letter, in which he recommended his surviving family to my good offices . . . . . I have had so many proofs of your generosity, and of your Christian consideration, that I shall be persuaded you had good reasons, which did not impeach either of them, if you should contribute nothing; and I should be a slow scholar indeed, if I had not learned your friendly regard for myself too well to impute your noncompliance to any failure in that quarter. But where are you gone all this time? I wish you would give a look in upon us during our stay here, where, D. V., we shall continue, except for an occasional visit for a day or two at a time to see Mr. Henry Thornton, till the meeting of Parliament. Here is a good house, and a pretty good library, with large fires within doors, and a sweet place without, which, even at this season, retains the traces, most unambiguous traces, of rural beauty. It really would give me pleasure to see you, only favour me with a line, that my only other proposed visit to town, if I pay one at all, may not happen at the time of your coming. I must not trust myself with another sheet, and so I will on this crowd in my best wishes for you in time and through eternity. Ever your sincere friend,

My dear General,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P.S. I ought however, before I lay down my pen, to inform you that I have this day heard from a friend that the French government have abandoned the designs

on St. Domingo, and are about to offer treaties both to Christophe and Petion, stipulating against slavery: this looks well. I have received to-day, also, a packet from Henry I. of Hayti, or rather from his secretary of state. You shall see it.

JOHN BOWDLER, ESQ. JUN. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Docketted by Mr. W. "Dear Bowdler, day after dear Henry Thornton's death — delightful picture of the man — just before his own seizure."]

Lincoln's Inn, January 17, 1815.

My dear Friend,

I think I am indulging my own feelings rather than attempting to sooth yours in writing these few lines; but I have felt so much for what I too well know you must feel at hearing the heavy tidings of yesterday, that I cannot remain silent. Oh! it has been a heavy blow to dear Mrs. H. T., to you, to me, to all! I am glad to think you were in some degree prepared for it, and it is quite a consolation to me to know that you saw him, and that the interview was so full of satisfaction, though not unmingled with sadness. To the latest moment of my life I shall thank God for His exceeding mercy in having prolonged his life three days after my return from Staffordshire. Had he died on Friday morning (as might well have been), it would have been a cloud and grief for all succeeding years. Thank God I saw him on Friday, and was able to answer two questions respecting his worldly affairs, which gave him

some anxiety. I saw him also again on Sunday evening, and the memory of that interview will long, very long, be dear to me. His deep humility under the sense of sin, and perfect trust in his Redeemer; his feeble voice, yet clear, unclouded intelligence; his depression under the weight of disease and suffering, yet meek collectedness and unaffected resignation, were a sight for angels to behold. I doubt not they did behold — and bless that Almighty Lord who had subdued even sin and death.

You will be glad to hear, if this should reach you before you receive intelligence from others, that Mrs. H. T. has been most wonderfully supported. She was perfectly calm, and not materially ill, at a late hour last night. The account this morning, for I did not see her before I came away, was that she had some sleep, and no terror or agitations during the night. Mrs. Grant was with her, who was surely made to comfort the distressed — so soft, so gentle, so unwearied. I trust in God that dear Mrs. H. T. will be sustained and comforted under this tremendous blow by his grace and power, who has peculiarly claimed for himself that blessed privilege. Poor M. was greatly afflicted; but she has an extraordinary degree of self-command, and though she will suffer much, youth is buoyant.

While at Kensington Gore I had no time to think of any sorrow but those around me; but since I left them I have begun to feel for myself and for others out of his immediate family. Alas! alas! indeed God has not forgotten to be gracious, all is ordered in love and pity; but the loss is irreparable. Even this day, the first that

has dawned on his lifeless body — even this day I have wanted his counsel. And how many, many, are there to whom his example gave confidence and guidance in their humble exertions, who leant on him, and looked to him in every season of doubt or temptation. But I have grown querulous, and it is time to have done. I am not ill, but a little overcome. Surely those who survive should consider his memory as a bond of the closest affection: and while they humbly endeavour to supply to the world by their increased exertions the sad vacancy which his death has occasioned, endeavour also to supply to each other, by the warmest friendship, that chilling void which is now filled only by his memory. And, oh! may that blessed day come quickly when, cleansed by the blood of our common Saviour, we may all sit down together in a kingdom where death shall no more have dominion over us. I meant to have written to you before this sad event drew towards itself all my thoughts and feelings. I meant to have said how deeply both —— and I felt your great kindness, and how much we delight to think of your affection for us. Indeed, it is among the blessings which we most highly value and cherish. God, I humbly hope, will be gracious unto us, and bless us, and teach us to serve him in lowliness and faithfulness all our days. Our present affliction, I trust, will teach us, by His grace, to recollect that this is but our pilgrimage, and that true union must be in a world where we need not fear a separation. May God bless you, my dear friend, and give to you and yours all that is good in this world and for ever.

Yours, very affectionately,

J. Bowdler.

I saw dear C. just before dinner; though cast down himself, he came to comfort me, and he did comfort me. His first enquiry was if you were informed of it. Indeed, indeed, we both feel much for you.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Chelsea, Tuesday afternoon, half-past Three.

My dear Wilberforce,

I am just returned from the sad scene at Clapham Church Yard, and have not time to answer your letter as fully as I could wish.

The last tribute of respect to the mortal part of our friend has been properly paid. There were a very great number of respectable persons, and few dry eyes. The chief mourners were Mr. Thornton, Mr. John T. and the two elder boys, Lord Teignmouth, Mr. Grant, Mr. C. Grant, Mr. G. Thomson, Mr. W. Smith, and I, with a friend from Hull whose name I forget: we, with Mr. Melville (and nobody else that I remember) accompanied the hearse in mourning coaches from Kensington Gore, with our carriages following, and were met in the church, where a great number of other friends were waiting, by the clergyman, &c., and the usual part of the funeral service was then performed, after which the rest of the solemnity took, at least, an hour, — I think an hour and a half, — from the long train of carriages which had to take up and set down at the church yard.

I had little curiosity to see who were there, but saw Lord Calthorpe, Macaulay, Brougham, R. Grant, &c. of our acquaintance, and among them poor old Mr. Wolff. The coffin was placed on the top of his mother's: we saw that of his father, too, and several others of the family, in the vault.

But how trivial these things! I mention them only because you desire me to give you any particulars that may be interesting. The most interesting part of the transactions, the deep and respectful grief of the attending friends, you can easily conceive.

I must hasten to conclude, or lose the post. My dear Mrs. S. desires me to say that if you are not soon better, she wishes to go to see you. I hope to-morrow's post will relieve us from all anxiety on that score. It is, perhaps, providential that you could not come. The long stand in the church yard was very trying; I could hardly bear it.

I was afraid for Mr. G. and Lord T., and should have been much more so for you.

God bless you, my dear W. Pray take care of yourself. We could not bear, — I am sure I could not,— to lose you also. May I never see that day!

Love to Mrs. W. and the children.

Yours ever, very affectionately,

J. S.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Barham Court, January 26, 1815.

My dear friend,

I must acknowledge the receipt of your beneficent inclosure with many thanks.

A complaint which still confines me to my sofa, (though much abated, D.G.) rendering the act of writing irksome to me, I must check the disposition I should otherwise feel to pour forth some of the effusions of my heart. Our loss is very great, yet the common old consolation is not, and never can be, worn out, that our loss is to our friend unspeakable gain; and assuredly when we reflect on the exchange of a body of sickness and pain for the happiness of paradise, and a clearer prospect of the opening glories of the heavenly world, we must be conscious that it would be gross selfishness to wish to recall him. Yet poor Mrs. H. T. may indeed sorrow, though not as those who are without hope; and she is wonderfully supported.

Your letter quite comforts me under the disappointment of having been absent from the funeral. From what I since hear, it was indeed providential that I yielded to my good wife's tender importunities, and remained on my sofa. Farewell. May God be with you, both in your person and your publication. When are we to see it?

With kindest remembrances, I am ever,

Your affectionate friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

LORD CALTHORPE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

February 1, 1815.

My dear W.,

You may probably have heard before this reaches you, that our dear friend * has been taken from us sooner than any of us had anticipated—he died soon after twelve o'clock to-day, rich in faith, and in the promise of eternal blessedness. I shall feel real comfort in seeing you.

Every affectionately yours,

CALTHORPE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO REV. DR. COULTHURST.

London, February 11, 1815.

My dear Doctor,

When I tell you that scarcely a week had passed after the death of our excellent friend Mr. H. Thornton, before another friend was called away, no less valuable, and only less dear to me because of more recent acquisition, and when you hear that yesterday morning brought me tidings also of the sudden departure of Dr. Buchanan, and when I tell you that all these trying events find me labouring under an unusual turmoil of worldly business and engagements of time and thought, some of them of a very distressing and trying kind, you

* John Bowdler, Esq. Jun.

will not expect a long letter from me, but allow me to offer (as when we meet a friend with whom we have not time to converse) a friendly assurance of the continuance of attachment and regard, as standing in the place of a more continued expression of my thoughts and feelings. One sentiment however I will express, because, blessed be God, it has been impressed on me by all the various scenes of grief and sympathy with which I have been lately conversant:—How great, how glorious, are the supports and consolations of true Christianity! Its very sorrows and humiliations bear about them a character of purity and dignity more than human. Its very griefs are more really joyful and hopeful, and hence more soothing and cordially cheering to the mind, than the greatest of merely earthly pleasures, or the most abundant measure of sublunary prosperity. I beg my kind remembrances to Mrs. C. and my friendly regards to all our common friends. Farewell.

Ever yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

MRS. H. MORE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Barley Wood, February 18, 1815.

My dear Friend,

Thornton, Bowdler, Buchanan: the blows come thick upon each other. How wounding to the heart! how awakening to the soul! I dare not expatiate. I

should not write to-day, being so very unwell, but to acknowledge the receipt of the half bill. How rejoiced should I be, after what you said of the insolvency of your tenants, to have returned it, but I am in some little danger of bankruptcy myself. I thank God my personal resources are increased, but my foreign ones are almost entirely cut off. I will explain myself when I am better able to write, and you (if that time should ever arrive) at more leisure to read. In the mean time I ought, for the sake of your feelings, to say that I shall be able to get on this year, and I may not live to another. The bounties of Providence have been too constantly abundant to me ever to admit of distrust. I will never have more of you.

What a mercy, and I bless God for it, that you did not go to the funeral. I am told it probably cost Dr. Buchanan his life. His removal too! O what room for meditation! God seems to take away these human props, to bring us to bear more entirely on himself. Take care of your health. You do not say you are better. I hope you don't go to the House. As Knox once said to me, "Let the dead bury their dead." God bless you!

Pray sometimes for
Your affectionate,
H. More.

DR. MIDDLETON [BISHOP OF CALCUTTA] TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Calcutta, February 18, 1815.

My dear Sir,

The intercourse with which you honoured me before I left England, and the memorials of your vigorous mind and immortal labours, which I see before me on the shelves of my library, induce me to hope that you will not consider a letter from me as an unwelcome intrusion. I landed at this place on the 28th November, after a voyage of five months and a half, not accompanied with any circumstances of danger, yet not leaving behind it any pleasing recollections. My reception here was such as I had reason to expect from the well known fears which prevail at home with regard to Hindoo prejudices, and the reserve which it is thought necessary to maintain upon all subjects connected with our religion. These fears, I can already take upon me to affirm, are wholly groundless; and I suspect that the unblushing manner in which we betray them, has not raised us in the estimation of the natives: they cannot understand why we should be ashamed of our religion any more than they are of theirs; and the common remark was, when they heard that a Bishop was to be sent to India, "We wonder that you did not send one long since: you have a head of your army and of your law, and of every thing but your religion." In truth they are the most tolerant people in the world: they would not suffer us to violate their temples, but they reverence all persons invested with a religious character, and that too in proportion to the

consideration shown them by persons of the same faith.

The withholding, however, of those marks of honour*, which are usually granted to persons in public stations on their arrival in this country, was a less serious evil than the want of a house. When I reached the mouth of the Ganges, I learnt from some visiters, who came on board our ship, that I had long been expected, but that nobody knew whither I was to go when I reached Calcutta; and true it was, that no residence had been provided for me: however, I received a very friendly invitation from Mr. Seton of the Supreme Council, for myself and my party; and I was obliged to trespass on his hospitality, which indeed I shall ever remember with gratitude, for full two months, from my inability to meet with a suitable house. This circumstance, together with the inadequacy of my salary, has attracted considerable attention; 5000*l.* per annum, though in England it may seem to be a large sum, is not here an income which carries with it any impressions of respect; nor is it on a level with the salaries paid to those who are less liable than the Bishop to the demands of charity, and to calls of a public nature. The judges are paid at a better rate of exchange than that which has been adopted for the Bishop, who thus receives upwards of 4000*l.* per annum less than the chief justice of Bengal, and about 2000*l.* less than the puisne judges. The archdeaconries at 2000*l.* per annum are probably in proportion to the bishopric. The Bishop is in future to collate to these preferments from among the Company's chaplains; but the senior chaplains, who are probably in general the fittest

* Vide Le Bas's *Life of Middleton*, vol. i. p. 75.

to be archdeacons, could not in any of the presidencies, without great sacrifice of emolument, accept the appointment. But though enough has not been done to give weight and efficiency to the new establishment, I have no reason to infer that it will have to encounter any prejudice: the general feeling seems to be in its favour. From the members of the government I have received every individual attention, and they are evidently disposed to do every thing in their power to aid me in my undertaking; and I have noticed among the inhabitants of the settlement some sacrifices to propriety, which they had never before been called upon to make, but which have yet been made very cheerfully: a masquerade had been announced for the day after Ash Wednesday; but so soon as it was understood that Lent would be observed, and that there would be prayers every Wednesday and Friday, the masquerade was abandoned in a manner which caused me to rejoice that it had been contemplated — it was by a public advertisement, specifically assigning the reason. At the theatre, also, where the performance used to be on Fridays, the day is changed during Lent. I hail these as very happy omens.

I have here a very beautiful church, and I find it in admirable order. I preached in it for the first time on Christmas Day, and it was probably the most memorable day of my life. The congregation was numbered, as is the practice here, and amounted to 1300 persons: they heard me with attention for nearly an hour, after which we collected for the poor about 700*l.*, and 160 persons staid to receive the sacrament. It was altogether as impressive a spectacle as I ever beheld.

Since my arrival my time has been too much occupied with receiving and paying visits, in looking out for a house, and in getting settled, to allow me to pay much attention to a variety of topics, on which I am anxious to be well informed. On my voyage, however, I read your "Speeches upon the Moral Improvement, &c. of the Natives of India;" and I am fully convinced, from all which I have heard on the spot, that your views of Hindoo morality are much more just than many persons will allow them to be in England. An expression which fell from Sir James Mackintosh in a charge given at Bombay, was treated as a solitary testimony to the falsehood and prevarication of witnesses in courts of justice: but in conversations which I have had with judges and barristers of the supreme court, with the judges of the Sudder Dewanny Adawlut, and with the magistrates of provincial courts, I find that their experience has led to the same conclusion, that the Hindoos have no feeling of any religious or moral obligation to truth; and the concurring depositions of three or four witnesses are not received as satisfactory evidence, unless when they are corroborated by circumstances, which are beyond the reach of fraud and imposture.

All this is quite familiar to the minds of people here; and I have heard much wonder expressed that the fact should be disputed in Europe. I do not, however, altogether despair of the Hindoos. I have had visits from several of the most opulent who reside at this presidency, and I find them extremely ready to converse both upon morals and religion. On the latter subject they are quite afloat: they seem not to know

precisely what they should believe, though they freely admit that the prevailing usages of Brahminism are destitute of all authority; they appear for the most part to be Deists. One of them told me that men of sense in all countries had the same religion, and that in reality his Shaster and mine were the same. The best symptom which I have remarked is, that an idea is gaining ground among them that they should derive advantage from being instructed in our arts and literature; and they are beginning to talk of schools. I am expecting from Benares a Hindoo project upon that subject. If they once become generally instructed in the elements of our knowledge, and the Brahmins could be provided for, Christianity, I doubt not, would follow. But considering what sacrifices we demand, and how few we have made, I really think that the propagation of Christianity in India is as extensive as we could possibly expect. If, however, I have leisure, of which I have no right to expect a large share, I propose to throw together some remarks upon this subject, and I shall take the liberty of troubling you with the result.

An occurrence has just taken place here, of which I fear that no very good use will be made in England. You remember, no doubt, the pathetic story in Dr. Buchanan's book of Sabat. He has been long employed by Mr. Thomason in translating the New Testament into Arabic: he accompanied Mr. T., who is up the country with Lord Moira; but about two months since he made some excuse for coming to Calcutta. About a fortnight ago he published an Arabic volume (which turns out to have been his object in

coming hither), in which he renounces and reviles Christianity in the grossest terms, works up all the objections to it which he could collect, and establishes the truth of the Koran. As to Christianity, he declares that he never believed it, but that he wished to become acquainted with its weakness, and that he was well paid as a translator. Of this work he has published six hundred copies, which he has distributed gratuitously: two of them were sent to gentlemen who were just embarking for England, and one is sent off to the Archbishop of Canterbury. He is returned to Arabia, probably expecting that his zeal for Mohammedanism will recommend him among his countrymen as effectually as his profession of Christianity served his purpose in India.

I find myself engaged in a multitude of very interesting objects, and I see before me an ample field for exertion. In a situation so new it is impossible but that I should have to encounter various difficulties; but I trust, that with the blessing of God and continued health, I shall be able to accomplish somewhat towards the improvement of the state of religion and morals in this country; and if I should be made the instrument of perceptible good, I shall not regret the sacrifices which I made in leaving England. Lord Moira has appointed the 14th of April for a general thanksgiving on account of the peace in Europe, official tidings of which reached us but six weeks since. Afterwards I purpose to have a confirmation; and towards the approach of the cool season in November, I hope I shall be preparing for my visitation to Madras and Bombay,

a voyage of about the same distance as that from England to New York; but after sailing 15,500 miles, it appears to be trifling.

I observe with great pleasure the endeavours which you have used to put an end to the slave-trade among other nations: I hope that the general congress will not think the subject undeserving of their deliberation.

I shall be greatly obliged if you will do me the favour to present my compliments to Mrs. Wilberforce, and also to Lord Teignmouth. To Mr. Grant I shall write by this conveyance.

I am, my dear Sir,
With sentiments of the highest respect,
Your much obliged and very faithful servant,
T. F. CALCUTTA.

THE REV. JOHN JEBB [afterwards BISHOP JEBB] TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Brampton Park, June 24, 1815.

My dear Sir,

I should find it very difficult, if not altogether impossible, to express the pleasure afforded me by your most kind note of the 17th; that pleasure, however, was by no means unmingled with sincere regret, that you should have felt any manner of uneasiness at fancied inattention to me. I was fully aware, that your various high duties and inevitable engagements, — duties and

engagements, which, to most other men, would be absolutely overwhelming, produced a moral impossibility of your doing, in any instance, what your benevolence and regard for those who have kindly permitted me to call them friends, would have prompted you to do.

To have enjoyed more of your most valued conversation, I will not deny, would, under favouring circumstances, not only have been matter of present comfort, but of delightful retrospect. I trust, however, that I am more disposed to be thankful than regretful, — thankful that I have enjoyed more than was my due. Your kindness in bringing me along with you to our most excellent and interesting friend at Battersea Rise cannot readily be forgotten; and the lines which your goodness induced you to write to me, shall, if I am permitted to reach my home, be placed among my treasures.

It is enough to say that I am at Brampton Park: these simple words cannot fail to recall to your mind, whatsoever is good and pleasant, in the most attractive and the most durable form.

Farewell, my dear Sir, and believe me,

With the sincerest respect and esteem,

Your much obliged and faithful servant,

JOHN JEBB.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MISS THORNTON.

Kensington Gore, Friday, October 20, 1815.

My dear M.,

I cannot tell you how much I value your most kind present *: it shall be preserved amongst my choicest treasures. The very author is my prime favourite; but one of the very best of his works, which had so long been the closet companion of so dear a friend, and at such a time, presented to me by such a donor, and with such language, — the whole makes up a mass of causes for attachment which exceed all calculation, much more all words to express. It is, perhaps, well that I take up my pen at a time when I have scarcely a minute at command; indeed, at first, I did not mean to touch on the topic which alone has hitherto occupied me; but my feelings hurried me away. I meant merely to state that unless my sister was worse to-morrow I would bring R. over to dinner by about half-past four o'clock, and stay all night if you can bed us. I must break off. May God bless and keep you.

Ever your most affectionate friend,

W. WILBERFORCE

* A copy of "Baxter's Saints' Rest," which had belonged to the late Mrs. Thornton.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

Brighton, November 22, 1815.

My dear Lord Liverpool,

I almost blame myself for not having sooner written to your Lordship on the subject of this letter. I delayed, that I might at the same time address you on another topic: but I can no longer forbear expressing to you the grief and shame with which I have heard, since I had the pleasure of conferring with your Lordship in London, of the savage persecution of the Protestants in the south of France. I remember you said you were expecting further intelligence, and I have partly abstained from troubling you, trusting that your attention was already directed to the object. But silence may be misconstrued into want of sympathy; and both for myself, and for all whom I have heard mention the subject, I can truly declare that on none did I ever witness deeper concern and indignation.

From more places than one applications have been made to me with an eye to public meetings. I am aware, however, how undesirable it is to take any step which would call into fermentation the old hostility between Protestantism and Popery: in Ireland, especially, the consequences might be injurious; indeed, there is no saying where the evil might end, especially if we consider that one of our allies, Austria, is Roman Catholic. Yet but a very little exertion would cause the Protestant flame to burst forth throughout the whole of this island, and it would burn brightest, probably, in the north of it. There are many, however, who are not deaf to the

voice of prudence, and who, if they could be privately assured that our Government was using its influence in earnest with the court of France, to induce the latter to put down with a strong arm the scandalous outrages on the persons and property of the Protestants, would be content, for the present at least, to wait the effect of its efforts. Let me beg the favour of a few lines from your Lordship, as soon as you can favour me with them, on this interesting subject, as several friends are waiting for communications from me.

The other matter I will leave for the present, only adding that the account, which subsequently to my interview with you has reached me, that the French Abolition is not secured by being made a part of the treaty, like the former qualified Abolition, would have forced me to trouble you on the subject again, but for the assurances your Lordship kindly gave me, that our great object should be made sure by a direct stipulation or positive recognition in the treaty with France. Reposing on your assurance I have dismissed anxiety on that head.

I remain always,
My dear Lord Liverpool,
Your obliged and faithful servant,
W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH.

Brighton, December 10, 1815.

My dear Lord Sidmouth,

I am so earnestly intreated to apply to you about some poor black men that are wandering about London half, or literally more than half, starved with cold and hunger, that I cannot well refuse. Yet I am perfectly convinced that the object pointed out to you by any one on whose representations you could place any reliance, would receive the same attention as when named to you by myself. But I think you cannot have lived to our age without having had requests made to you, to which you could not well say no, and to which, nevertheless, you scarcely could say yes with propriety. . . . .

And now, on this head, what shall I say more?

It is happy for you, however, that it is on Sunday that I am called on to address you, when of course I confine myself to the matter of charity or necessity, which compels me to take up my pen; otherwise, it is so long since I interchanged a word with you, that I should be strongly tempted to trespass pretty freely on your time. As it is, however, I will only express my hope that you and yours are all as well, at least, as usual. About a month ago I heard a breathing of an amendment in a quarter, where, I will not say I should rejoice in it as much, but as sincerely as yourself. Yet, even in this afflicting dispensation, it is an unspeakable support and comfort to have reason to believe, first, that the event did not happen fortuitously; and, secondly, that

the character of the chief sufferer was such as to afford those who loved him most just reason to believe that the stroke was medicinal and remedial, not judicial; in love, and not in anger or punishment. By and by these mysteries of Providence shall be cleared up. I have had, you probably may have heard, to attend the dying bed of another friend, the widow of my friend Thornton. But I cannot omit naming to you one circumstance which I., from the connection he has with it, may have mentioned more slightly than it deserves. It pleased the Almighty, in taking from the nine orphans of my friend both their parents, to signalise his providence, by raising up in Mr. and Mrs. I. foster-parents only less valuable than their real ones. But while we recognise the Divine hand in such events as these, we ought not less to give the due measure of praise to the human instruments; and I want words to express my sense of the various admirable qualities which Mr. and Mrs. I., and their nearest relatives too, have displayed, in volunteering this permanent service. In Sir H. I. it really deserves the name of magnanimity.

But I am, indeed, doing the very thing I disclaimed, trespassing on your time. I believe you are well acquainted with Sir H. I know you think highly of young I.; and that there are few things you relish so much as to hear the just eulogium of your friends.

Permit me to beg my kind remembrances to all your family, and to assure you that I am,

My dear Lord S.,

Your Lordship's very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A SON AGED THIRTEEN.

Brighton, Sunday, December 17, 1815.

My dearest ——,

Though it is quite contrary to my ordinary practice to write letters on a Sunday, yet having being unable to prepare a few lines for you yesterday, I feel myself warranted, by our blessed Saviour's principles and example in this respect even in the case of the Jewish sabbath, to take up my pen to-day, in order that I may meet my dear boy on his birth-day, with the assurance of his father's tenderest concern for his temporal, and far more for his eternal happiness. O, my dearest boy, could you look into my heart and witness all the anxious thoughts and anxieties that are therein, of which you are the beloved subject; could you hear the earnest prayers that I put up for you, — you would then form a better idea than you now can, of the liveliness, and depth, and force of a father's affectionate solicitude for his much loved child. And on this day especially my prayers are poured forth, that the gracious Father of the spirits of all flesh, who has promised that He will hear the prayers of them that call upon Him, may hear my supplications on your behalf, that as you have already enjoyed, and still enjoy many advantages which few others possess, you may not at length render them the cause only of your greater condemnation.

It makes me tremble however, sometimes, to reflect on the peculiar degree of your responsibility.

Yet why should I despond? I know that God will be faithful to His promises; that He will give His Holy Spirit to them that ask it with sincerity and earnestness. And will not my dear boy thus ask? Has it been already bestowed? I hope it has in some degree. But, O grieve it not. Respect the still small voice of conscience. Try to please your Saviour, by practising daily little acts of self-denial for His sake, since He does not call you to greater sacrifices. Guard against thinking of other things when you are saying your prayers, and try then to feel as if you were in the presence of God and of Jesus Christ. Think of all that Christ suffered for you, and also that He is at this moment earnestly wishing to bring you to heaven, that you may not only escape the flames of hell, but that you may enjoy the unspeakable glories of that blessed state, where is the fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore. And when Christ is thus thinking of you, will you not think of Him? Between seven and eight especially, I shall imagine you in your own little room, and also between twelve and one in the day: I shall retire myself into my own room, and pray earnestly for you. Remember, my dear boy, that we do not naturally love God and Christ, and desire above all things to please them as we ought, but we must have this love and desire before we can be admitted into heaven; and the change from the one state to the other must be effected by the Holy Spirit. My heart is very full. I can scarcely refrain from tears, though people are coming into the room; and I shall allow myself to pour them forth by and by for you, with my prayers, when I get alone. May God bless

you, my dearest boy: may He enable you to remember your Creator and Redeemer in the days of your youth; that you may grow up to be the joy of your old father's heart in the days of weakness and decrepitude; and that he may at length meet you in a better world, to part no more for ever. Again and again may God in Christ be your everlasting portion.

Ever, ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MISS THORNTON.

Brighton, December 20, 1815.

Alas! alas, my dear M., with what mixed emotions have I read your most interesting and affectionate letter, for if, on the one hand, I must be void of all — (interrupted for about an hour)—I was going to say I must be void of all feeling . . . . . Again interrupted, and when at liberty, forced to go out, to pay two visits of business, and I am come in again just as dinner is about to be announced — and such, I grieve to say, is the too common history of my days, so that of late, instead of clearing away part of an old epistolary arrear, and writing an addition to a Slave Trade piece which is to be translated into Italian for the use of the Pope, I have not even been able to pay my way; that is, every day's post has brought more claims on my pen, than the day has enabled me to satisfy. Add to this, the voluminous West

Indian papers printed since the last session, with which, before the next begins, I must be thoroughly acquainted; (only arrived this morning,) and I have to put on the stocks as soon as possible various letters to foreign correspondents, which ought by this time to have been half way to the places of their several destinations. Oh that I could write, and my correspondents read, short hand; I must add, that I could get on with it at your rate of galloping; for I solemnly assure you I speak the truth when I tell you that, though a fast, often I fear too fast a talker, I am always a slow writer, and now, alas! a much slower than I used to be.

And now I might almost adopt for my conclusion from all these premises the East Indian's close — What shall I say more? More however, much more, I have to say; and I fear the sum of all of it must be, that though wishing, from the bottom of my heart, that I could render the service to the world, and the gratification to many common friends by executing the task* in question, I am almost compelled to abandon the hope which I had gladly welcomed. Perhaps the work which no one pen could execute, might be achieved by a confederacy. If Dealtry, and Charles and Robert Grant (and of course, in every undertaking, Macaulay) would combine their efforts with myself, we might effect something. But.... worse and worse—the interruptions of this day have at length received their completion, by a summons this evening to the Pavilion. I conceived that, by a friendly intervention with General Bloomfield, I had provided

* A Memoir of Mr. Henry Thornton.

against this evil; and I can only say, that if the invitation is to be repeated, I shall soon say farewell to Brighton. I must break off. Of course, I have received your most interesting parcel. Farewell: every blessing attend you all. Tell Inglis I will write soon.

Ever yours most affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO SAMUEL ROBERTS, ESQ.

Near London, January 25, 1816.

My dear Sir,

I am but very recently returned with my family to this place (Kensington Gore), and am extremely engrossed on my first arrival, owing to my never having been able to come over as usual, and set to rights the accumulated confusion of a whole session, in order to have clear quarters for the next. As to the lottery: — In principle, as I have often told you, I entirely concur with you, and indeed I have again and again expressed my opinion in the very strongest terms. But you ought not to forget that the amount of the evil is very considerably lessened, as I believe, by the regulations introduced to prevent insuring. At the same time, I confess — rather I contend — that the thing, being vicious in principle, ought to be altogether relinquished.

I dare not make any engagement to take up this subject, because I am pre-engaged to another grievance,

if I may use a word implying unity, to denote a whole long series of physical and moral evils; but I will sound other friends who are like-minded. I shall be animated to proceed, if there be any prospect of success; but I remember, too well, that the last time we opposed the lottery, when my friend, Mr. Babington, the excellent M.P. for Leicester, spoke at much length, and with great knowledge of his subject, we had a smaller minority than on any other occasion. And when there is no prospect of success, and when our opinion has been declared again and again with the utmost solemnity, it scarcely seems advisable to employ on any evil that time and trouble which, otherwise directed, might be productive of practical benefit.

I hope our friends in your circle are well. I have felt a greatly increased interest in James Montgomery, since I heard of him from some friends of mine who passed through Sheffield, in the autumn of 1814. But I am sadly neglecting several most pressing claims of business, and must abruptly subscribe myself, with every friendly wish, my dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Kensington Gore, February 1, 1816.

My dear Friend,

Many and cordial thanks for your long letter. It is just what I wanted to receive—an account of the absent friend, and her goings on; and on the spot I take up my pen to begin an answer, which shall be completed piecemeal, as opportunities shall offer. You mention my reception at the Pavilion: nothing could be more gracious; I should rather say, more unaffectedly gentlemanlike. He personally invited me to dine with him, desiring me to fix my day; and when, of course, I expressed myself willing on any day, — "Well, then, to-morrow. I assure you," he added, "you will hear at my table nothing you will disapprove: I hope, indeed, at no time; but if ever there did any thing of that sort pass, there should be nothing of it when you should be with me." He invited, as I afterwards heard accidentally, Lord Ellenborough to meet me, and was really quite the English gentleman at the head of his table. Poor fellow! I longed to have a private half hour with him; for it is sad work. Dinner comes on table at six; at nine the dinner party goes into the other rooms, in one of which is music, in another cards, in others, and a long gallery 160 feet long, walking about, till about a quarter or half-past twelve, and then, on the Prince's retiring, all of us depart. But really it is a large part of existence, from six to half-past twelve daily, or rather nightly.

The Princess Charlotte is a fine fair German looking personage, with a sensible countenance and a commanding air. I believe, but nothing certain was known, that there is foundation for the report of her being likely to become the wife of Prince Cobourg, a very handsome foreigner, of high blood, and, which is better, no dominions. By the way, I forgot the civilest part of all the Prince's conduct towards me. Finding invitations to the evening parties come pretty thick upon me, I mentioned one evening to Bloomfield, that evening engagements broke in upon my family plans; that I was at Brighton for a quiet life, my boys at home, &c.; and that, though highly honoured and gratified (really true) by His Royal Highness's kindnesses, I wished to decline frequent invitations. The Prince himself was told of it, and, in the handsomest way possible, begged me to suit my own convenience: he should always be happy to see me, &c. I am forced to break off, indeed I have kept this by me for two or three days in the hopes of a vacant evening; but I had better send it than keep it any longer. Oh, how I sympathise with good old Baxter in feeling peculiar pity for the great and high of the earth! May God's best blessings attend you. Kindest remembrances.

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ.

Wednesday morning.

My dear Stephen,

I have been quite uneasy since we parted, from the fear of my not having treated you with the same affectionate disposition to conform to your wishes, which you always show to conform to mine, or even to anticipate them. Yet I must do myself the justice of saying, that I am not conscious of any selfish wish to consult my own inclinations rather than yours; but I have sometimes thought, when you ask me whether I had rather do such a thing, or the contrary, that I answer with more strict truth than is commonly practised, or than you, from living in the world, are used to. (But I must not write so early in the day, and you perhaps may not quite understand me.) As to coming to you to-morrow, if I knew what you really wished, it would give me pleasure to do it. So observant are you of every opportunity of promoting my comfort, it would be shocking, if even in such little *petitesses* as these, I had not real pleasure in consulting your wishes. So honestly tell me what you wish, and I shall be gratified by acting accordingly.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO CHARLES GRANT, ESQ.

Kensington Gore, Friday evening, April 19, 1816.

My dear Friend,

Though I thank God I am considerably better, yet I have now and then such sensations as indicate to me but too clearly that I am not yet well. And I am the more disposed to take care of myself, from the hope that by a little more nursing I may be once more fit for my ordinary labours. I congratulate you on being out of harness, and I trust I shall now and then see a little of you, since you will no longer be imprisoned in the India House.

I feel the importance of the subject of your letter; and I will request of Lord Liverpool the interview you suggest. But I think there are many reasons why it would be desirable that you should accompany me. Lord Liverpool may be supposed to have some official dread of any one whom he may deem so much of a theorist as myself, and therefore to counteract that impression, and to prove to them that my sentiments and feelings on the subject in question may be participated by a gentleman who is as well acquainted with India as yourself, it may be highly serviceable for you to accompany me. I must not, however, use your name till you authorise me so to do. But if you will give me leave I will write to Lord Liverpool in both our names, and desire him to appoint a time for seeing us. My dear Sir, though we meet so seldom, I can truly assure you that you and yours possess a secure place in my heart;

and our not seeing more of each other is a standing grievance with me. Farewell, my dear Sir.

I am,

Ever your affectionate friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

THE BISHOP OF CALCUTTA [DR. MIDDLETON] TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bombay, June 21, 1816.

My dear Sir,

I have within these few days been favoured with your obliging letter of the 30th of November. The latter part of it, in which I am personally interested, though your candour induces you to consider the point referred to as a public concern, I will dismiss as briefly as possible. Since I had the pleasure of writing to you, I have had some experience of the value of money here, and of the demands to which the Bishop is liable, most of which, if it be his duty to recommend and support the cause of Christianity, he ought rather to encourage than repel. It seems not to have been considered that the person called the Bishop of Calcutta is in truth also Bishop of Madras and of Bombay, and of every place in this vast empire, where Christian institutions require his support, or distress solicits his assistance; and after travelling, as I now have done, through a considerable part of India, to make myself acquainted with the true

state of things, I am convinced, that in hardly any station in the world is more good to be accomplished by adequate means, than in that to which Providence has called me. I am well aware that the most ample means may be alienated to the purposes of avarice, and that there can be no security for their proper application. You do me the honour to believe that this inconvenience is not to be apprehended in my own individual instance, and I hope that you judge rightly. I am very little able to enter into the views or feelings of any man, who, in such a situation, and especially not having a family, should find nothing more captivating to his imagination than the prospect of accumulating a fortune. But of this more than enough.

I reached this place on my visitation about five weeks since, having left Calcutta in December, and thence proceeded by sea to Madras, and by land through Pondicherry, Tranquebar, Tanjore, and by Cape Comorin, through Travancore to Cochin, where I embarked for Bombay; and by the time I reach Calcutta again, my visitation will have carried me, by sea and by land, 5000 miles. My land journey through the south of India has been very interesting to me; and though the country is in general dreary, and some fatigue attends travelling, however slow the progress, in this languid climate, I would not willingly forego the recollection of what I have seen and observed. You are aware that the native Protestant Christianity of this country is nearly confined to the parts I have visited, and it attracted a great share of my attention. These Christians are in general very well taught, and are able

to give at least as satisfactory an account of their faith as the lower classes of people in England: they are intelligent, humble, decent in their demeanour, and regular in their habits; and I think that Christianity is visibly a blessing to them, even without any reference to futurity. It is natural to ask, is this blessing so well appreciated, as to be in the course of more general diffusion? and I really must acknowledge, that I have not observed any thing which can encourage such a hope, at least to any great extent. Very few of these Christians are converts, but are the sons and grandsons of converts, and there are circumstances, not perhaps so strongly felt in the days of their progenitors, which, though they do not produce apostasy, are of sufficient force to operate against conversion. We are now the acknowledged sovereigns of this vast region, and the natives seem to ascribe to us a power even beyond that which we actually possess. In this state of things, they have no idea that we are restrained by prudential motives, from giving to Christianity any degree of encouragement and support which we may think it deserves; and they know that the Mussulmans, even in places where their power was not firmly established, did always plant their religion, however violent and unjustifiable were the means. This difference of conduct induces a comparison; and if the result was only that it impressed them with the tolerant spirit of our faith, it would be well; but it goes much further. A learned Brahmin told me in Bengal, that "the English did not wish the natives to become converts to Christianity;" and he justified his remark, by adverting to the very little which we had done to show

our religion. The Brahmin's opinion, I have little doubt, is that of every thinking man among the Hindoos; and they are led to question the strength or the existence of that conviction, which is apparently so indifferent about convincing others, and so backward in showing favour to those who are actually convinced.

I receive a multitude of addresses from the Christians in the south; but they generally turn upon one or both of these two points, — they request to be employed under a Christian government, and they seek to be exempted from drawing the rutt, or idol-car, in the pagan procession. As to the former, it is certainly true, that though the profession of Christianity is not by any means a formal disqualification for the subordinate offices filled by natives, very few native Christians are actually employed. I have conversed with several gentlemen, who have the disposal of such appointments, with the view of recommending the Christians to their notice; and I remarked that the ground of rejection has usually been, either an opinion that the Christians are very undeserving, or an unwillingness to invest persons with authority whom the other natives would not respect. I can account for this only by supposing, that the vices of one class of converts have been charged indiscriminately on all. The Popish converts are generally very exceptionable, and unhappily they are, even in the south of India, perhaps as three to one Protestant, so that the name of Christian convert is not in good report; besides that it is not asked whether any man be himself a convert, or of a family which has been Christian for three or four generations. As to dragging

the rutt, it is indeed a sore grievance: one man told me that he was severely beaten every year on the occasion of a great heathen festival for refusing to assist, but that he would rather die. In the removal of this complaint there may be some difficulty. In taking possession of territory, we guaranteed to the pensioned princes the integrity of their religion, of which these festivals and processions are the principal part; and the rutts are so enormously large and heavy, that they require the whole male population of a village to drag them along, and the people, without reference to their religion, are bound to perform this service by a sort of feudal tenure. I have not had time to inquire fully what can be done in this business, but it is a subject of great triumph to the heathen, as well as of discouragement to the Christians; and these two considerations — I mean the want of employment and the want of toleration (for so these poor people very naturally regard it)— are well calculated to operate against conversion among the lower classes; from whom, however, it is too true, for the present, that the only converts are made. As to the higher orders, they know very little about our religion, and that little excites no interest. Many of them will hardly believe that we have a religion, and even when they are assured to the contrary, they proceed not to inquire what it is, but merely add it to the list of superstitions, of which they had heard before, all of which they maintain have one common object, and really mean the same thing. The surprising apathy of these people, and their want of all curiosity, is one of the most unfortunate circumstances in their character.

There is within three miles of this place a populous Hindoo village, many of the oldest inhabitants of which, as I am assured, never visited Bombay. Many similar facts are within my knowledge, and they are not unimportant: they prove that we have to act upon a torpor of intellect, which we must dispel before any thing else can be done. "The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing," is a fine description of the frame of mind which is ardent in pursuit of knowledge; but it is totally inapplicable to the Hindoo.

You have shown, however, in a kindred cause, that difficulties may be great without being insuperable, and that wherever good is the object we ought not to despair. I do not think, so far as I can judge, that the present case is desperate, provided the proper means be adopted; though even then I have no hope that any great and general result may be expected by us of the present generation. You have a stupendous fabric to overthrow: its foundations are broad and deep; its high antiquity excites veneration. The few who possess any knowledge are interested in protecting it; and implicit obedience to all which they teach is incorporated with the public institutions, and interwoven with the feelings and associations of the vulgar from their earliest childhood. The first object probably which attracts the eye of an infant is some ridiculous form, which he is taught to regard as an object of homage and awe. Against a system thus firmly compacted no great success was to be expected from any thing which has hitherto been done. We have had no church establishment which was deserving of the name; our places of Christian

worship have been few, and generally very mean; our toleration has been such as to be mistaken for complete indifference; the missionaries who have come out are known to be unaccredited by the government; and the minds of the people, owing to the decay of native institutions and our failing to substitute any thing in their place, are said to be buried in deeper ignorance than they were two centuries ago. If this statement, then, be generally correct, our efforts should be directed to two points: we should exhibit our religion to the natives without reserve; and we should endeavour to remove the prejudices which prevent their seeing it in its true light; and if political considerations stand in the way of either of these, I fear that the glory of christianising India is not designed by Providence for our nation.

In the view of exhibiting our religion, our church establishment should bear some proportion to the power and dignity of the mother-country; for else we seem to tell the natives, that, even in our own estimation, our religion is a subordinate concern: our clergy should be more numerous, and should have a respectable rank in society, instead of being placed below lieutenants and surgeons, and all but writers. Handsome churches should be seen wherever we have civil or military establishments; and we should incorporate into our churches the native Christians in the south, (who, I believe, would gladly join in our communion,) by building them churches, which they exceedingly want, and giving our ordination to their native priests, with some means of support. Our endeavour should be to form congregations wherever we can, and to build them churches,

rather than to confine ourselves to the small number both of churches and of clergy, which is indispensably required. And if, without holding out a bribe to conversion, we could show that we regarded with some feeling of interest, not perhaps new converts, but the Christian sons of converts, we should at least remove one source of discouragement.

But still there would be need of attending to the other point suggested — that of dispelling their prejudices, which prevent the natives from seeing our religion in its true light; for merely to see it would be insufficient: and this must be chiefly by education. As to giving them a Christian education at once, it would evidently, if it were practicable, be all that is required; but it is out of the question. The utmost which can be done is to found schools, in which, with the elements of useful knowledge, children should learn our language; and from this latter acquisition, though the English books in use contained not a syllable upon Christianity, I should anticipate important results. Between the English and the native languages there is not more difference than between our modes of thinking and theirs upon the common questions of life: our facts, our inferences, our remarks, our good sense, and our practical application of our knowledge, are things quite foreign to the native mind, and could hardly find their way thither without rendering it a very unfit recipient for what is usually obtruded on it as sacred truth. The question is, whether schools of this kind would find pupils? and I think it is the general opinion that they would, at least at the presidencies and principal stations,

especially if proficiency in the English language were made a qualification. Something of this kind is now projected at Calcutta, under the patronage of the government, to be called the Hindoo College of Calcutta, for teaching Bengalee and English to 300 children. I regret that I am absent; though, for obvious reasons, it might not be expedient that I should take an active part in it. As to the translating and dissemination of the Scriptures in the native languages, though it can hardly fail of some effect, I am led to infer that more is expected from it than is really warranted by the circumstances of this country. The native mind is not sufficiently advanced to be benefited by it in a great degree: the adult has a great deal to unlearn before he can learn any thing else; and the Bible Society, both at Columbo and at this place, has been obliged to declare that schools and elementary tracts must be the first objects of attention.

I find, however, that my letter is proceeding to an unreasonable length, and I must be more brief upon topics of less importance. When I left Calcutta it was my intention to pass some time in the country of the Syrian Christians; but when I reached Travancore, the season was so far advanced, that no time was to be lost before I embarked for this place. I staid at Cochin, however, three or four days, and had a visit from the Syrian Bishop, attended by several of his clergy. I had the pleasure of presenting him with a copy of the Oxford edition of the "Philoxenian Version of the New Testament," of which neither the Bishop nor his clergy seemed even to have heard; they are, indeed, in so depressed a

state, that the wonder is that they possess any learning at all; though this defect promises to be remedied by a school or college under the patronage of the resident, Colonel Munro. In return for my present the Bishop has engaged to superintend the transcribing by some of his clergy of a complete liturgy and ritual of his church, which I am anxious to examine, as the only authentic mode of judging what their tenets really are. I have no expectation of finding them to be in so close resemblance with those of the Church of England as Dr. Buchanan has led people to suppose. They acknowledge seven sacraments, and in their forms of worship, as well as in those of the Greek and Armenian churches, there is a great deal to which we English Protestants should object. The further, indeed, we look into these matters, the better shall we be satisfied with the Church of England. Still, however, the Malabar Syrians are an interesting people, and I wish to become better acquainted with their actual condition; for which reason I purpose to touch at Cochin on my return, and to employ a fortnight in getting together all the information I can. The Bishop has lent me, in the mean time, some liturgical MSS., that I may not be altogether a stranger to his doctrines; but hitherto I have been so much taken up with more important business, that I have scarcely glanced at their contents. In truth I find my situation in India to be almost any thing rather than one of literary leisure and inquiry.

I am well acquainted with Mr. Grant's Essay on the Hindoos, which furnishes, I really think, the best information on the subject which is to be obtained in

England; and even in India a great deal of research would be requisite before any important additions could be made to what Mr. Grant has collected. You advert also to the public disputation in Persia with the late Mr. Martyn: it is unfortunate that Mohammedism does not depend upon argument for its support, else it would have disappeared from the earth long since, with all other false religions; for I take Christianity to be the only religion in the world which rests upon what we call Evidences. By the way, what a religion is Mohammedism as a rule of life! I have been looking through Sir J. Malcolm's "History of Persia," — a very interesting book, especially to a person who is now within a few hundreds of miles of the Persian coast: but what horrors does he detail in the lives of many very strict followers of the Prophet! The last King of Persia, Aga Mahommed, was absolutely a monster; and yet we are told that, whatever had been the fatigues of the day, he uniformly rose at midnight to offer his devotions as prescribed by his religion. I much question whether a twentieth part of such atrocity be compatible with the loosest profession of Christianity, or could even subsist in a country where Christianity is acknowledged; and I am disposed to think, when I reflect on the unfeeling character of Buonaparte, that he has been saved from the perpetration of still greater enormities by not having been born in the East. If he had been brought up in Persia, and in the religion of Mohammed, I see no reason to doubt that he would have rivalled the very worst of the heroes of Sir J. Malcolm's history.

You have heard, no doubt, of the difficulties into which

we are brought here, in consequence of sending out Scotch chaplains. Such a measure might, in England, be made very plausible, but nothing could be more needless or more mischievous. The Scots here are, indeed, very numerous: many of these are Episcopalians, but many more were Presbyterians; but they had generally adopted, and appeared to be perfectly satisfied with the Church of England; and they were not less likely to be satisfied with it because irregularities were to be corrected, and better order established by a provision of the legislature. The experiment, however, was not tried: a Scotch chaplain came out in the same ship with me, and others followed him; and it is peculiarly unfortunate that he thought it his duty at the commencement of his career to open a battery against the Church of England, and to declare that "the church in India," meaning his own church, is a legal establishment. He still persists in the same claims. He holds kirk sessions, (a thing, I believe, unknown in the dioceses of England and Wales,) and publishes their orders in the newspapers; and he has lately begun to solemnise marriages. In these proceedings he appears to meet with no check in this quarter; though if any clergyman under my jurisdiction had attacked Presbyterianism on this gentleman's arrival, and had merely denied of it what he has affirmed, I should certainly have marked such indiscretion with my strongest censure. The affair gives me great concern, and it is impossible not to anticipate the consequences. The English and the Scotch in India had hitherto been as one church and one nation, and it was not desirable to tell them

that they were really distinct. We are too few to afford to be divided, and especially to be divided without a boundary. I understand from Calcutta that the spirit of dissension is already abroad there, and is producing its usual fruits; and if it is to be maintained, nothing worse could have happened for the interests of Christianity: every difference among Christians in this country is a diversion in favour of the false religions.

You will be pleased to hear that I have succeeded in establishing Committees of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge at the three Presidencies. We have remitted above 1000*l.* to the Parent Society; and I am sanguine in the hope that the books to be sent out to us will find their way into barracks, hospitals, gaols, and schools throughout India. I have reason to believe that there are English regiments without a single Prayer Book.

I hope we shall not hear of any mutiny in the south of India for the next twelve months, as there are persons who would lay the blame upon my visitation. All that I know is, that the Brahmins were every where very civil to me, and I to them; and that, in one place, a deputation of them waited upon me, considering that I was invested with a religious character, to request me to obtain for them from the Government a larger allowance for the expenses of their pagoda.

I am much pleased with this place. The town is but indifferent, but the harbour is very beautiful; and the Governor here, Sir Evan Nepean, is ready to afford me his aid in every Christian object. He is, indeed, a

valuable man, and his example has produced great good in this settlement.

I have the honour to be,

My dear Sir,

With the truest respect,

Your most obliged and faithful servant,

T. F. CALCUTTA.

ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Keswick, July 25, 1816.

My dear Sir,

* * * I have sent to inquire if Mr. Francis be at Keswick. It is not two years since your excellent friend Mr. J. Bowdler was here, and after a day, which I am sure all the party at one time must have remembered as among those which were eminently delightful, I dined with him and poor John Calthorpe in the kitchen of an old farm-house. They are gone! and I who survive them have survived also my best earthly hopes and highest earthly enjoyments. They only who knew me in my daily habits can imagine, or believe, how great has been the extent of my loss, or how it is possible that a child of ten years should have been so entirely the companion, as well as pupil, of his father. I was recovering my Greek in the process of teaching Herbert; we were learning German together, and were to have begun Saxon in the same manner, as soon as the Saxon

Chronicle should have been published. For his age, there was no better Latin scholar; in Greek, he was fit for the fifth form at Westminster; and he was acquiring with little expense of time, and no trouble, the French and Spanish. With all these acquirements going on, his life was like a continued holyday; so much was it his disposition and mine to mingle sport with study, and find recreation in all things. He was the constant companion of my walks, and felt as much interest in my pleasures as I did in his. His disposition was as beautiful as his intellect, and therefore I had ever an ominous apprehension that he was not intended to grow up on earth, where it was not possible that his nature could be improved, and but too certain that it must, in some degree, be sullied. The feeling which thus prepared me for this privation has not been without its use in enabling me to submit to it with resignation. I hope and believe that I have borne this affliction as it becomes a Christian. The stoicism which I endeavoured to practise in youth (and not without signal benefit) might have supported, but it could not have consoled me. My heart is weaned from the world, and the brightest spot in the prospect before me is where the light from heaven shines upon the grave. Yet do not imagine that I give way to sorrow, or indulge in vain retrospects and guilty regret. "The Lord gave; the Lord hath taken away.; blessed be the name of the Lord." Never were these words pronounced with more heartfelt sincerity than when I repeated them in the most painful scenes and moments of my life. I am thankful for the abundant blessings which I still possess; but of all things

most thankful for having possessed a son whom I loved so entirely, who was so entirely worthy to be loved, and whom I shall one day rejoin.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Respectfully and truly yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO Z. MACAULAY, ESQ.

Brighton, Saturday night, 1816.

My dear Macaulay,

I am shocked to say that it is, indeed has some time been, Sunday morning. I will therefore only say, that I think it might probably be highly useful to have the Pope condemn the slave-trade; even Spain and Portugal might then consent to abolish under this impression. I, some little time ago, wrote to Mr. Butler, with whose influence over the Roman Catholic body in this country you must be well acquainted. Perhaps it would be right for the peers and chief commoners of the Catholic persuasion to apply to his Holiness. Perhaps a private letter from Mr. Butler might be advisable. I have only answered Mr. B.'s letter by this post. I have not now time to explain why I did not write to him sooner; but I wish you and he would confer together; you would soon come to a sound opinion, whether to send Dr. Carro's pamphlet (with additions), translated into Italian, as that, the authority of which, from its

having been sanctioned at Vienna, would be least excepted against; or in what other mode to address his Holiness. Perhaps Mr. Butler may want to know where to obtain such particulars of information as it might be advisable for him to allude to, if not to state in detail. If you have not a copy of Lord Castlereagh's Vienna publication (Dr. Carro's), I can send it you for Butler's use. There is no saying what influence might be obtained over the Spanish and Portuguese ecclesiastics, and through them over the courts, if we could gain the Pope. I will send you an extract from Butler's letter — all that is material.

Farewell: every blessing attend you and yours.

Ever sincerely and affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH.

Hastings, December 14, 1816.

My dear Lord S.,

I have long been wishing for some plea for troubling you with a letter, having been disappointed of the pleasure I had promised myself of accepting your kind invitation to Richmond Park during this recess. If you recollect my family circumstances during the very little time I have been near London, you will the less wonder at this inability. I assure you it is not want of

inclination; there are now very few indeed left with whom I can even talk over the old scenes about their interior; very few, indeed, who are at all acquainted with the real particulars of it.

But I will put on a separate paper the business on which I have to address the Secretary of State, though I did not mean so to do when I took up my pen. Let me only add, that in passing through town, or halting at Kensington Gore for a very few days, had I foreseen I could not afford to accept your friendly invitation, I should have tried to obtain even a quarter of an hour of you at your office to hear about matters which the newspapers do not mention.

I hope all your family are well with one exception. It is, indeed, a most afflicting, may I not add, a most mysterious dispensation! But I really have no doubt whatever (I have distinct ideas in my mind when I make the assertion) that it will hereafter appear to have been for the party's real good, and if so, how little will it signify, or rather, how little will it appear to have signified some few thousands of ages hence, whether the progress of this particular specimen of moral vegetation was suddenly chilled and arrested, or whether it had been suffered to proceed from the interesting beauty of its early bloom, to the rich maturity of its fruitage; for never let us forget that grand consideration in the estimate of such cases, that we have to do with a Being who sees events in their causes and effects in their tendencies, who, in short, to use a homely but expressive phrase, which I am sure I do not feel that I am using irreverently, will take the will for the deed. Few passages of Scripture

have sometimes comforted me more in this view than that where the Almighty is represented as having said to David, when the offer to build a temple was refused, (I have been at the trouble of looking out the passage; it is 1 Kings viii. 18.) "Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto My name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart." I am persuaded I need not make the application (in writing to you) of this passage to the class of cases to which I was above alluding. How probable is it, I often think, that it will then appear (I mean then, when all the mysteries of divine providence shall be developed), that the individual, the loss of whose future usefulness we have deplored, has been saved from some unforeseen evil which might have befallen him, to his grievous suffering at least, — perhaps to the impairing of his moral principles. How little, when I began, did I intend to spend either your time or my own, as I have been doing; but I am sure you will require no apology for my sending what I have written out of the fullness of my heart. I will only add, that I am ever,

My dear Lord S.,

Yours, very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

6, Widcombe Terrace, Bath, January 1, 1817.

My dear Wilberforce,

Your kindness will, I dare say, make you anxious to have a line from me to-day. I am, blessed be God, free from pain, and, I think, every way better; but I cannot, like you, find spirits for conversation and work too. The former is a great effort with me, and exhausts and unfits me for the other. It is your easy chair; it is my plough and pickaxe. My only adequate refreshment after desk labour is light reading, or solitary musing in a walk. The many kind suggestions, therefore, which you gave in a late letter about friends in or near Bath were strong dissuasions with me from going there. I mean to be a hermit *, and I want nothing now but a little working health to be very comfortable. My lodgings (or rather my house, for I have a whole one,) are quite delightful both within and without. The scene from my windows *riant* and beautiful, in spite of the season and weather. On the side of an amphitheatre, covered with gardens and meadows still verdant, studded with pretty boxes, and lined and fringed with colonades of trees, which speak even now what their foliage must add to the scene, a cascade and two pieces of water just below me, — and no Bath, no road that exhibits during hours a single carriage, nothing beyond the rim of the ornamented punch-bowl, half down the side of which I

* *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iv. p. 299.

have but the sky. I had marked the place when last at Bath for its privacy and beauty, its near access to the pumps without sight of the company, and its neighbourhood to Claverton Downs, my favourite promenade; but ignorant of Bath, and forgetful of names, I could not describe intelligibly to others, and if I had they would have told me there was no lodgings here, being quite surprised when I at last, after two or three sallies, forced the place, and told them I had got lodgings on Widcombe Terrace. If this was good luck, you will say it was still better to find here exactly every thing I wanted, the best desk for writing I ever met with, and all the accommodations for an invalid. I own I was surprised to find one of my great desiderata also provided for me. I regretted on leaving town that I could not, without too much trouble and expense, carry my encyclopedia, which at a distance from large libraries I always have occasion to refer to. But, lo! I find it in the back parlour, which I had not gone into before. I must add one anecdote worth notice. On sitting down to breakfast this morning I was going to take up a volume of "Hume," in 12mo., or of "Forster's Essays," which I had brought with me, but, adverting to the day, thought I would have a little of something better, and therefore opened another book I had put up in my trunk, which you know to have been a great favourite with my dear S———: "Doddridge's Life." It was one of her give-away duodecimos, probably never opened before. I opened upon, and read only one paragraph, which is at the 359th page, and is as follows:—"I would thankfully and cheerfully renew the dedication of myself to God's

service, and would humbly resolve, by His gracious assistance, to spend the next year of my life in more ardent devotion, in more important and resolute studies, in more vigorous attempts for public usefulness, than I have ever yet known. I humbly refer to Him the disposal of all events, particularly to determine as to the continuance of my life. I think if I have any reason to desire it may be lengthened out, next to securing brighter evidences of my title to eternal glory by my faithful obedience, it is that I may be able to do good in the world."

I put down the book, having food enough for meditation, and I am not ashamed to say to you, that one topic of it was the apparent strangeness of finding, as I opened the book at random, that very passage under my eye, so suitable to my situation, duties, and feelings, as well as to the season. Let the shallow reasoners, who distinguish a general from a particular Providence, or the cattle who perceive no Providence at all, laugh if they will. For my part, who am not less certain by experience of that delightful truth, the intimate ever present watchfulness of Divine Power, Wisdom, and Goodness over our highly-favoured race, than I am of any truth testified by my senses, I find no difficulty, and am conscious of no presumption, in ascribing my taking up that book, and opening it just where I did, to the suggestion of a superior mind governing the imaginations of my own. Perhaps it was my dear S———, now one of the ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who (unless disinherited by their own private choice) shall be heirs of salvation. But they are

allowed only to suggest, to warn, and so to adjust the spiritual aid to the exigency of the case, that we may not be tempted beyond what we are able to bear. They must put the immortal infant on its feet, and teach it to walk, not make it ricketty by constant carriage. An inclining power "assisting, not restraining, reason's choice," is the utmost range of their province; nor have I ever felt the slightest difficulty in reconciling such superior tendence with a will morally free.

I must abstain, for the present at least, from the subject to which the last thought was leading me, a subject artificial and presumptuous, reasoning on which has made many infidels, and much distorted the amiable features of the Gospel in minds otherwise devout.

I am, my dear Wilberforce,

Ever very affectionately yours,

JAMES STEPHEN.

ROBERT SOUTHEY ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Keswick, January 31, 1817.

My dear Sir,

I have not seen the book which you speak of, but I have transmitted the substance of your remarks to the Reviewer (be he who he may, for I know not), observing, of course, the secresy which you desire, and giving them all the weight I can. Many years ago, I remember upon some forgotten occasion, either talking or writing to Scott upon the subject of Claverhouse and

the Covenanters to the very purport of your remarks, and I recollect observing, that though this bloody persecutor was celebrated on earth by the name of Dundee, Claverhouse was the name by which the devil knew him. James Graham had the right feeling on the subject, and never wrote more like a poet than when he touched upon it. I urged him as strongly as I could to take those times and circumstances as the groundwork either for a dramatic or narrative poem—a subject perfectly congenial to his powers, and which he could have executed admirably. But he preferred ploughing away in his "Georgics," and wasting his efforts upon a sterile soil.

I shall look anxiously for your name in the Debates. From false doctrine, heresy, and schism, Parliament cannot deliver us; but from sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion it may.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours, with the greatest respect,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

ALEXANDER KNOX ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Dublin, Dawson Street, March 23, 1817.

My dear Sir,

I request your permission to present to you my particular friend — the most reverend Doctor Everard*, coadjutor to the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cashel,

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iv. p. 323.

and now going to London as an accredited agent and watchman from his brethren, to be in waiting, lest their interests should suffer for want of superintendence on the spot, during the looked-for discussion.

Upon the use of his going at this time I can form no opinion. He merely obeys the injunction of the R. C. Bishops; and I imagine does not distinctly know what he is to do, or with whom to confer. To relieve my poor friend, as far as in me lies, from this embarrassment, I thus endeavour to procure for him the honour and pleasure of conferring with you. I will not place him before you as a true specimen of the Irish R. C. prelate, but if they could take him as their model it would be a blessing to them and the country.

I would not take this liberty, if I did not hope that you would be interested by my friend. Possibly you never yet met a creature of this exact species — namely, a R. C. archbishop *in partibus infidelium.* You must know that his archbishopric is no less than that of the far-famed Mitylene. This idea can hardly be dissociated from the burlesque. But the man himself averts every such impression. He is upright, pious, charitable, simple of heart, full of kind feeling, as good a subject as lives, and as well affected to the Established Church as a consistent Roman Catholic can be; for he is certainly a consistent and attached Roman Catholic.

I do not, in introducing this worthy and interesting man to your acquaintance, intend or wish that you should tax yourself in time or attentions in any manner or degree implying inconvenience. I should wish him to have the comfort of one conversation with you, and

let your own convenience or inclination settle every thing farther.

Were Lord Calthorpe well, and in London, I should take the same liberty with his lordship which I am taking with you; but as I have heard poor accounts of his health, and also that he intends to go abroad, I do not hazard the attempt. I most cordially wish him to grow better, and to enjoy a pleasant and (if it be the will of Heaven) not rapid course through this lower world to that better one above, where, sooner or later, I have confidence of his arriving.

I am as zealous as ever for Roman Catholic enfranchisement. My motives spread out would fill a volume. I desire it on civil accounts; I desire it on religious accounts; I desire it as the sole means, in this country, of terminating dark conspiracy and noonday assassination. How can these mischiefs be effectually prevented, but by residents of the rank above, superintending and influencing the rank below?

> Take but *degree* away: untune that string,
> And hark! what discord follows!

In the ordinary distribution of society, it would seem that the higher portions were not more than sufficient to restrain and influence the lower classes. But if so, look at the state of Ireland, and say, could she fare better than she does, seeing that in her, through difference of religion and alienation of mind, the mass of the population is under no such superintendence? The Protestant part of the lower classes has it more than in proportion; while in the part where it is most needed,

it neither does nor can exist — the man of station being paralysed, the man of wealth being unattracted.

Believe me,

Most cordially yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

P. S. I ought to add, that Dr. Everard is a high favourite of the Archbishop of Cashel, whose strong language to me not long since was, "I delight in Dr. Everard!"

ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Keswick, March 23, 1817.

My dear Sir,

In the year 1794, and in the twentieth year of my age, I wrote "Wat Tyler." It was immediately taken to London by poor Lovell (afterwards my brother-in-law), and put into Ridgeway's hands. Soon afterwards (a few weeks) I went to London myself for a few days, and saw Ridgeway in Newgate; and was informed that he and Symonds would publish it. They never informed me that they afterwards changed their opinion, and I never inquired concerning it: first, because my heart as well as my mind was fully employed; secondly, because I perfectly acquiesced in the fitness of suppressing it; and, lastly, because I considered it unworthy a further thought. Had I been in town I might, perhaps, have reclaimed the MSS.; but not

going there till the year 1797, I reckoned it among the follies of my youth, and was contented to forget it. My youth has no worse follies with which to reproach me. I was then a republican and a leveller, and stated such principles broadly in the dialogues — the hasty overflow of my spirits in two or three mornings. My counsel have done me more wrong than my enemies. I feel no shame respecting the work, and acknowledge no wickedness in it. I was a boy, who wrote as he felt, and as he believed, in his ignorance and inexperience; and I was as ready to dare all danger in promulgating those opinions then, as I am in contradicting them now.

Upon seeing the work announced, I lost no time in making oath to the circumstances, and applying for an injunction. The delay which has intervened has not been my fault; and my object in so doing was to acknowledge the work (that I might not seem to be ashamed of it), and stop its sale, because I know how mischievous it is at this time. Winterbottom, a Dissenting minister, has said that I gave the book to him and to D. I. Eaton, and gave them a fraternal embrace when they promised to publish it. I gave the book to no person, but was to have had a share of the profits. The persons who engaged to publish it were Ridgeway and Symonds. Winterbottom was in the room; D. I. Eaton I never saw in my life; and as for fraternal embraces, if you knew me, my dear sir, you might as soon expect to see me dancing a hornpipe on the stage now, as believe that at any part of my life I could play the fool in this way; so utterly discordant is it to my constitutional habits and manners.

I have addressed two letters to William Smith, which, if they are not disapproved by my old friend Charles Wynn, will appear in the "Courier." The provocation will excuse their warmth, and, indeed, demanded it. To proceed further in legal courses would only draw upon me fresh expenses; of vexation I shall not speak, as regarding myself, for I have felt too many real afflictions to be hurt by any arrows which malice can direct against me. But if it be any satisfaction to Mr. William Smith, he may be told that he has made my wife ill. It is well for him and for me that I know the wickedness of duelling. How is it that the spirit of faction can have thus possessed him? Had I ever concealed my sentiments, or attempted to conceal them? Because I was a republican, or rather, as I called myself, a *pantisocrat*, at the time "Wat Tyler" was written, I had abandoned all my prospects in life for the purpose of going to the wilds of America. Those same opinions are expressed in poems, which I have never felt a wish to alter, because I never was ashamed of having in such times and such circumstances formed vain imaginations of a new system of society, or rather, as I then believed, of restoring the system of Christian society. I have merely affixed to those pieces the date of the year when they were written, and left others which accompany them to explain that as the author grew older he grew wiser also. So far have I carried the feeling that I have not even suppressed a poem upon Sunday Morning; because, erroneous as it is, the feeling is not such as could make any person of sense

reproach the man who could thus feel in his youth. Nor would I have sought to suppress "Wat Tyler," had not the verses, which I wrote when the mob were ferocious in their loyalty, and the spirit of anti-jacobinism was reigning in full vigour of intolerance, become most mischievous now, when the sentiments, long since discarded by men of my stamp and class in society, have been taken up by the rabble, and are threatening the utter overthrow of all our institutions. I heartily condemn the piece; because the principles which it contains are misapplied, and put in a mischievous form if addressed to a mob prepared for them, which they were not when written. They could then have been injurious only to myself. My feeling would be very different if the work contained anything irreligious or licentious—there was no error from the heart; and when I pray for forgiveness of my sins, the political aberrations of my youth have never been reckoned among them.

Believe me I feel very sensibly the kindness of your letter; and to show how I feel it, I could find in my heart to give you a brief sketch of my pilgrimage in this perilous world, and lay open not only the outward circumstances, but the inner man. It is my intention, whenever I can afford time, to do this at length for posthumous publication; but when the season of leisure may arrive, or whether it may ever be allowed me, who can tell?

If no unforeseen evil should occur to prevent my purpose, I shall arrive in London on Thursday, the 17th of next month. It will give me great pleasure to see

Lord Calthorpe—and also if I should find Lady Olivia in town.

Believe me, my dear Sir,
With great respect,
Yours faithfully and thankfully,
ROBERT SOUTHEY.

REV. DR. GASKIN TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.*

[Pri. Docketted Church Claims — deserves most serious consideration.]

Stoke Newington, March 25, 1817.

My dear Sir,

I received both your letters on the subject which I had ventured to mention to you. Seldom, indeed, have I been more gratified than by the Christian spirit and humble temper which you have exhibited in your frank avowal and statement upon it. You evidently regret the occurrence, for reasons which I consider to be very good as far as they go. We are enjoined, as you rightly observe, to "provide things honest in the sight of all men;" and we are to be cautious of giving offence where offence is likely to be taken. We are, likewise, to act, and to appear to act, consistently; and to endeavour that the good we have done, or have attempted to do, be not counteracted by our subsequent conduct. On such correct views as these, recollecting your professions of attachment to the Church of England, and conscious

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iv. p. 318.

of your sincerity in making them, you confess that had you "preconsidered the subject fully you would have acted differently;" not, indeed, on a conviction that what you did was wrong in itself, but on the probability that it might be misconstrued, and your example cited as a justification of schism. To the spirit of this I cordially accede; and especially as I have much reason to apprehend that your example, in the matter before us, will greatly tend to strengthen a principal parishioner of mine in his practice of frequenting the church in the morning, and that same Dissenting meeting-house in the afternoon, against which I have, hitherto in vain, attempted to dissuade him, by calmly pointing out his error.

But, my dear sir, you will allow me, I know, to say, that I think what you did to have been not merely inexpedient, and attended with a probability of evil by misconstruction, but that it was wrong in itself. You admit that schism is an evil in a religious, and even in a political view; and I apprehend that you will accord with me in defining schism to be a wilful separation from a rightly constituted church requiring no sinful terms of communion. The Church of England is not only a rightly constituted, but likewise an orthodox Church, and she requires no sinful terms of communion. All separation from her, therefore, in this country, is unjustifiable schism; and to unite, even occasionally, with such schismatics in public prayer, and especially in the peculiar and most characteristic act of Christian worship, must be singularly unjustifiable. There is no duty more strongly enforced in the New Testament than that of church unity. "I beseech you, brethren," saith an Apostle, "by the name

of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you." We are to "walk by the same rule, and to mind the same thing;" we are to "mark them that cause divisions and offences, and to avoid them,"—not avoid by declining the courtesies and good offices of life towards them, but we are to refuse all union with them in their "divisions and offences;" and it becometh us to follow the example of those Christian believers of old, who "continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." We are not only to adhere to the doctrine, but also to the fellowship, or communion of the Apostles; and with them we are to participate in the Lord's Supper, and in social worship, because they are "the ministers and stewards of the mysteries of Christ." That this had not merely a reference to the first Apostles, but also to their legitimate successors, is clear; because the promise of our Lord was to be "with them" (and consequently their legitimate successors) "even unto the end of the world." In addition, therefore, to the fact that our Dissenting teachers and their congregations are schismatical, a pause should be made to consider whether these teachers have a valid commission to act as "ministers and stewards of the mysteries of Christ." The Church of England considers that they have not that valid commission; and I believe that they do not themselves profess to have any other commission than what their respective congregations have given them, or their own fancies have imagined; and to all this even Quakers pretend. For the first fifteen centuries of the Christian

era the episcopal ministry alone was acknowledged, — *semper, ab omnibus, et ubique;* and when, at the Reformation on the Continent, a departure from it anywhere took place, necessity was pleaded; and the ministerial commission, under such circumstances, it was supposed, might be transmitted through the hands of mere presbyters.

This was a novelty, which we, blessed be God! are not called upon to defend. Our reformation was not so hampered. Whatever were our errors on that occasion, we restored the apostolical doctrine, and were privileged to perpetuate the apostolical ministry: with whom we have continued a fellowship, "in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Oh, that our spiritual improvement had kept pace with our privileges! Primitive Presbyterianism pretended, at least, to be in possession of the ministerial office by transmission; but whether that pretence exist now, I much doubt. Sure I am that it does notexi st among our Independent schismatics. Under all these circumstances, I trust it will appear that to unite in public social prayer with our Dissenters, and especially to communicate with them in the characteristic act of Christian worship, is indefensible. The Act commonly called the Toleration Act, but which calls itself, and should be called, the Act of Exemption, did no more than remove civil penalties: it necessarily left the spiritual sin of schism where it found it. I will only add, that I confidently trust you will receive what I have now written in the same kind and Christian temper wherewith you have written to me; and, assuring you that I

consider your letter as confidential, and that I will not unite in spreading a knowledge of the late occurrence,

I remain, my dear Sir,

With much affection and sincere Christian esteem,

Your obliged humble Servant,

GEO. GASKIN.

P. S. I know nothing of Mr. M., the present teacher at our Stoke Newington Meeting-house; nor under what class of Dissenters he denominates himself. His predecessor, I believe, was a sort of Arian. But, even if the views of these teachers in the radical articles of the Christian faith were as orthodox as possible, still they are unwarrantable schismatics, and they have not the apostolical commission to exercise the functions of the Christian ministry. This parish, during the Great Rebellion, had been a hotbed of regicide and fanatical delusion. After turning out the old rector, the celebrated Puritan, Dr. Manton, got possession of the church, and occupied the identical parsonage house in which I reside. After the Exempting Act of King William had passed, the meeting-house here was erected for the remnant of the Puritans who continued their separation and hostility to the Church; and it has continued open ever since, having some little endowment.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO HENRY DUNCOMBE, ESQ.

London, May 20, 1817.

[Mr. Henry Duncombe had been connected with many of the Latitudinarian party in Yorkshire, and through their influence, as Mr. Wilberforce feared, had been at one time in great peril of adopting Socinian tenets; but the books which had been read to him during many years of blindness, had opened to him the more cheering prospect which Christianity affords. In writing to Mr. Wilberforce, after a long interval, he had stated the alterations which had taken place in his opinions and feelings. "Old Harry," Dr. Burgh had written some time before, "has happy prospects before him. He has habituated his eye to look beyond our little landscape here. Like an exquisite painter, he has made its chief ornament the skies, and thence derived the light that gilds the whole. God bless him, and give him both here and hereafter the happiness he aspires to!"]

My dear Friend,

I really regret that I have not been able sooner to reply to your letter of yesterday,—a letter which I can truly assure you has given me more pleasure than any I ever received from you. The hand-writing of so old and so kind a friend, after so long a period had elapsed, during which we had not met either personally or by letter, must of itself be a highly gratifying circumstance to any man of common feeling. But the pleasure which your letter gives me is of a far higher order, as

well as far superior in degree. It arises from the assurance you give me, that you have been improving that peaceful retirement which a gracious Providence has afforded you in the evening of life for the best of all purposes, — that of preparing for the eternity that is to follow,

"When we have shaken off this mortal coil."

Blessed be God! He is willing to receive us, at any period of life, when we come to Him as penitent sinners through Christ Jesus; and He is ready also to give us His Holy Spirit, to sanctify our souls, and fit us for that heavenly state into which He means to introduce us. How strange it is that, though our understandings may be convinced that all the concerns of this short and uncertain life are as nothing compared with the never-ending condition of our future state, yet that our feelings, our hearts, will not obey this conviction; but we — the same persons who can feel as well as reason justly, where the distant interests of this life are in question — cannot help being more affected by some transitory gratification, or some petty object of a worldly kind, than by the immense and durable inheritance which Christianity offers to our acceptance in the world to come. It is the Spirit of God alone, I am convinced, that enables us both to know and to feel the superior worth of divine things, and thereby prompts us to pursue them with some corresponding degree of earnestness. But, my dear old friend, I must quit this delightful theme, once more congratulating you from the heart, and reply to the business of your last letter. I am now finishing my answer on the 26th; and it is

with extreme difficulty that even to-day I can obtain a quiet half hour. It is now past three o'clock, and from before breakfast till just now I have not been alone till within the last ten minutes; for though my resigning my seat for Yorkshire has given me in some degree the choice of my business, it has not at all lessened it. On the contrary, my having been so much longer in public life has added proportionably to the number of my assailants, and fresh ones (both personally and by letter) come forward faster than the others disappear: but, blessed be God! there is one day in every week in which I shut out the throng, and am refreshed by rising into a higher region, above all the contentious elements of our lower world.

I have been continually interrupted for the last half hour, though I thought I should be a little quiet after clearing my house of the set that was in possession; but a fresh swarm has forced itself in, and all my servants' perfectly true declarations, that I am extremely busy, will not secure me against intruders. I must hasten to a conclusion, or I shall not be able to finish my letter at all to-day. You will be glad to hear that Mrs. W. and my six children are all pretty well, and we overflow with blessings; but Oh, my dear friend! a family like mine brings with it a thousand anxieties. However, there remaineth a rest for the people of God; and I humbly hope, through the undeserved mercies of our blessed Saviour, to obtain admission into that world where pain, and sickness, and sorrow are unknown. Were you at hand, I should inquire whether or not I ever sent you a copy of my own publication on "Practical Chris-

tianity." If not, I should like you to hear part of it, though I am as well aware as any man of its defects. Farewell, my dear friend, and believe me

Ever yours sincerely and affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A SON, ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

London, July 21, 1817.

My very dear ——

I broke away from the last lingerers of a crowded breakfast party to come to town to one of those appointments with Ministers which our different societies have occasion to make. This morning it was the Church Missionary Society pleading the cause of the Antipodes, or nearly so —of the native population of New Zealand; a fine race of men, both in body and natural character, who have been treated often with the most savage and wanton cruelty by the South Sea whalers, as the ships are termed. It is really gratifying to reflect that we are thus contributing to save multitudes of unoffending beings from the grossest outrages; and still more, that we are taking measures for preserving from destruction several missionaries, and families which may be termed semi-missionaries, who would be likely to fall victims to the wars and affrays which the outrages of the ships might produce; for a prejudice

being conceived against the Europeans, the innocent may suffer for or along with the guilty. I did not conceive my story would be so long.. For I was about to follow it by stating that I had been detained till it was time to return to Kensington Gore. But as I find it will be too late when I get there to despatch a letter to go by this night's post, I am stopping at a friend's to scribble a few lines to you. I cannot possibly suffer this day to pass over without sending you the assurances of my most affectionate recollection; and my prayers will be offered up with augmented warmth this evening (though the special claim of this day was not forgotten this morning), that the Father of Mercies will enable us both to welcome this day with unalloyed delight and thankfulness. I really can scarcely believe you are nineteen; though, as you came into the world in 1798, Cocker will not allow you to be younger. But when you attain to my age, if it please God to prolong your life to such a period, which is much beyond what the actuaries of the annuity offices would assign you, you will be more sensible from experience than it is possible for a young man to be, how fast time seems to have galloped when we look on any event of fifteen to twenty years' previous occurrence.

When I took up my pen my mind was full of jokes about flutes and tailors, excited by your cheerful and gratifying letter (it is quite refreshing to me to hear your lively chat, though from such a distance), which I read as I walked through the park; but even if I had leisure, whereas I am much too late, the

idea of your birthday has so sobered my spirits, as to force me into a graver strain. I must, however, merely breathe the wish, which will become a prayer, to the effect of that I have already expressed. There is nevertheless one idea which I will add, — that of your being now in a situation and circumstances eminently favourable to the purpose of strengthening your moral character, to speak as a philosopher, or of growing in grace, to use the far preferable language of a Christian, prior to the trial on which you will enter on settling at college. When our Saviour Himself had any remarkable service to perform, — and good men have imitated His example, — He used to spend some preceding time in retirement and devotional exercises; and indeed His not commencing his public ministry till he was thirty, was itself an exemplification of my principle. I am persuaded, as I believe I before stated to you, that hereafter it will appear that you were placed in your present circumstances with a view to the confirmation of your religious and moral principles and habits. O my dear ——, let it be your care to prevent this gracious intention of Providence from being disappointed; in which case, indeed (it is an awful consideration, but so it is with all our opportunities of improvement), the enjoyment of your advantages would only swell the opposite account. But you would find it, I am persuaded, very useful, my dearest ——, if you were to reflect on your situation in the very light I have now stated — reflect habitually, I mean. This would tend to stimulate your efforts, as it may justly encourage your hopes. For only think how it would probably

have animated your endeavours if, on your entering the place where you at present are, you had heard a voice from heaven declaring to you, that you were placed there for the purpose of qualifying you for the enjoyment of an immense increase in the measure of your everlasting happiness. I believe it no less than if such an express assurance had been made; because it is no other than what is warranted by the positive declarations in Scripture of the character and dealings of our God and Saviour. But I must break off most unwillingly: I am to take the chair at a Bible association this afternoon, and shall not have time to dine and dress for it. I will look out some Reviews for you, and I hope to send them off to-morrow.

Do inquire for a land surveyor; there almost always is such a man in every neighbourhood: also is there any sensible farmer from whom you could learn all about agriculture?

Farewell; and believe me ever most affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

I also would apologise for my writing, if it would not be enough to explain that I have been, and still am, writing on my hat; bent to be an inclined plane *pro* desk, and I have bad implements too.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Near London, September 1, 1817.

My dear Friend,

Don't imagine that because parliament is prorogued I am almost in want of employment. Neither you nor I are likely to be in this situation; and never was it less mine than it is now, or than it has been for many weeks past. My foreign correspondence has become considerable; but it is all of it important, and likely, I hope, to tend to good: I cannot, therefore, wish it less. I was going to give you an account of it; but I remember that Macaulay's late wanderings began by a visit to you, and what he would tell you must have enabled you to anticipate that Hayti and its interesting population must find me much matter both for mind and pen and time. Then I am thankful in being able to say that I have some correspondents in the United States. I cherish that intercourse, because I perceive but too plainly, and I hear from good authority, that both in this country and in theirs there are fermenting in the minds of the greater number those bad passions, the too natural issue of which would be another war whenever some unforeseen incident should give occasion for a difference between the two governments. It is but little that an individual can do by private intercourse towards neutralizing, or, as poor Burke phrased it, dulcifying, the sharpening sourness of the public mind in either country. But yet it is one of the most important lessons which you and I have learned from our long

acquaintance with human things, that when we are working in the right direction the smallest force may be productive of results of immeasurable value. The friendly spirit that I show towards the Transatlantic children of our common forefathers may generate or enkindle a similar spirit in some American bosom, — that spirit light up the flame in some other; the kindly warmth may be communicated from breast to breast, and find its way to the congress and the council chamber; and all the mass of heat have arisen from a single spark struck out in what the world calls an accidental, but you and I a providential collision, between a well-disposed Englishman and a like-minded American, both of them grieving over the hostile spirit so generally diffused in each country against the other.....

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO REV. LEWIS WAY.

Stansted Park, October 8, 1817.

My dear Friend,

I think I can truly say that seldom an hour has passed while I have been awake during my residence in this house, which we shall have inhabited three weeks on Friday next, in which the owner of it has not been presenting himself to my mind. If it were not improper, and I do not see why a living friend may not rank as high or even higher than the imaginary deities of the ancients, and have even a better title to the phrase than

the deified (Un) worthies of the Pagan world, — were it not for this, I say, I would quote a beautiful passage from the speech of one of the patriots concerning the constitution, I think, in an earlier period of poor Charles's reign, — "The form of the temple remains, but the *dii tutelares* have deserted it." Don't suppose that this sentence of Oliver St. John's was whispered in my ear by old Noll, whom, till I again inhabited the room, I forgot had been so disloyally honoured with the prime place in the royal bed-room; put there, I suppose, to remind its royal inmate of the transitory tenure of kingly power in this country. But having never been here before but when you also were present, and occupying as I do your library, I cannot get you out of my head, or indeed out of my heart, nor in truth do I wish it; and therefore, instead of striving to effect the expulsion, I shall cherish the intruder, and assign him a permanent mansion in my heart of hearts, as our great poet phrases it.

Happening to be just now extremely pressed for time, and having that sad discouragement to a long letter, the consciousness that what the *writer* may be putting on paper to the neglect of urgent and important business may not reach the hand of the *writee* an hour sooner than if it should be written a week later, or even perhaps may not reach him at all; — with these discouragements, I say, I will repress the greater part of what I should pour forth to you, if you were now to come into the room, and do little more than let you know that here we are profiting from your kindness. Indeed, I will say that a friendly act was

never done in a more friendly manner, which I own I feel much more than the act itself. It is this, indeed, which makes me receive your kindness with great and undissembled pleasure; for to any one who knows as much of our common nature as you do, I, need not remark that though it is easy and common to feel that measure of regard for a friend which makes us take pleasure in doing him a kind service, a much larger measure of regard, nay, even a higher and nobler quality, as well as an augmented quantity, is needed for enabling us to receive a kindness from him with undefecated satisfaction. But as I must not trust myself with a second sheet, I must finish my preamble, for my letter is little else, and express the pleasure with which I have heard of your favourable reception. May it please God (it is not forgotten in our morning and evening devotions) to bless you abundantly as the instrument of good to His ancient people, and meanwhile may you be growing in your own soul in meetness for glory. So wishes, so prays, my dear friend,

Yours sincerely and affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

M. G. LEWIS, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

London, October 16, 1817.

Dear Sir,

When I had the pleasure of seeing you last year, I told you my fears of your being in the country on my return, and so it proves. I am really disappointed be-

yond measure, as I must sail for Jamaica before the end of this month, and should have greatly benefited by some previous conversation; and after my long absence, and having just been worried into making a fresh large Jamaica purchase, I am confined to London by law business, otherwise I should have sought you out in the country for at least a few hours. At present, I can only express my hope, that if you return to town before my departure, you will have the goodness to allow me an interview. If your stay should be protracted till November, allow me to say that if you will give me any West India hints, I shall be most grateful for them, and give them all that due consideration and respect which (coming from such a quarter) they must deserve; and if you will send me in writing any questions which you may wish asked, or doubtful points respecting either abuses or amendments which you may wish to have investigated, you may rest assured that I will spare no pains to get at the truth during my residence in the island.

But here is a point upon which I am most anxious to have your opinion; and as it is of considerable importance, I am persuaded that (slight as my claim is upon your acquaintance) you, as a politician and a philanthropist, will excuse the liberty of my laying the question before you.

On the 1st of next May I shall haye 600 if not 700 negroes at my absolute disposal. Now were you in my situation, what would you do with those negroes at your decease? I have no children,—those of my sisters have no claims upon me but what I choose to give them. While I live, the negroes are so happy and contented

that I feel quite unwilling to alter any part of their situation for fear of making them less so; and they sent me a message to that effect themselves the other day. But how can I secure them from being ill treated when I am dead? I do not mean by ill treatment, the cruelties of slavery, for really that is not any longer to be dreaded in Jamaica; but the hardships of it. I proposed a clause in my will, making the estate forfeited, if (under certain circumstances) the proprietor or his next heir did not visit it himself once in five years. My attorney asked me "how I could be certain that the proprietor himself would not be their greatest tyrant?" and the objection was unanswerable. Shall I leave all of them their liberty? Then they must have a provision made for them; and I could allot to them a certain portion of my land, giving them also their huts, provision grounds, and working implements: the rest of the land might devolve to my heirs; but without negroes to work it, it would be worth nothing, or but very little. As to my nephews, the mere ties of blood can have no force in a question like this: whether ten white individuals shall be able to afford two courses at table instead of one, or 600 blacks and their descendants be secured against the possibility of future ill treatment, is not a question to discuss for two moments. But if I set them free, how can I be certain that the consequences may not be dangerous to the island and to its white inhabitants? There are so many difficulties on both sides, that you will greatly oblige me by turning the subject in your mind, and enlightening me on a point so important. I have 600 human beings absolutely at my disposal; their future welfare is the

object nearest to my heart: how may I best secure it after my death? Remember that the question relates only to "after my decease;" — what I do with them during my life requires quite a separate discussion. I shall only say now, that I am convinced that it would be neither prudent nor kind to set them free at present.

You mentioned to me somebody's book on the treatment of negroes, which I did not recollect to have met with. May not this be a pamphlet, originally published simply as "By a Planter," without any name in the title-page? If so, I have the pleasure to say, that having met with it by accident, and being greatly struck with it, I carried it to Jamaica with me, and left it with my attorney, as the guide to whose directions he must adhere as implicitly as local circumstances would admit; and my estate has since been conducted entirely upon the principles of this book. I am also happy to be able to tell you that the captain of my merchantman informed me the other day that he was on my estate at Christmas, and that since my visit there the negroes had conducted themselves so well that my attorney was now reconciled to my system of management, and scrupulous in allowing them all the little indulgences and marks of kindness and notice which I had invented to induce them to work from motives of goodwill instead of terror and punishment. The captain particularly instanced the spirit of emulation with which the mothers made him notice their children, and the pride with which they showed him a sash of merit, which I had ordered to be given to every woman on her rearing a child to a certain age:

the births, too, have been more numerous than usual, and I understand (for I have not yet received my negro account of last year) that in the whole year only two children died, one of whom was born diseased. And with all this, my crops have increased instead of falling off.

As a set-off against these facts, reported by an eye-witness, and who is also returning with me to the island, I must mention, that I find a good-natured set of people circulating all over London reports that "the insurrection of 1816 was produced by my visit to Jamaica, and that my system of mistaken lenity had made my negroes so unmanageable, that since my quitting the island they have been obliged to be punished with ten-fold severity."

I will not apologise for intruding on your leisure on a subject which I know you to have so sincerely at heart, that probably all details are of interest to you. I will only add, that Hatchard of Piccadilly will convey to me any answer with which you may be good enough to favour me.

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely,

M. G. Lewis.

I beg you to make my best compliments to Mrs. Wilberforce, if she thinks them worth her acceptance.

SIR T. STAMFORD RAFFLES TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

On board the Lady Raffles, Spithead,
October 23, 1817.

My dear Sir,

I have delayed writing to you in acknowledgement of your last kind communications, in the hopes that I should have a few minutes to myself; but these hopes were never realised, and we are now on board our ship under weigh on our voyage to the East.

On the subject of missions, I can have no hesitation in recommending attention to the Eastern islands. Nothing of the kind has yet found its way to Sumatra and Borneo, two of the largest islands in the world, and containing a population of many millions. It is said that when the people of Celebes embraced Mahometanism, the Portuguese offered the Bible at the same time. A council was appointed by the sovereign to report which of the religions was the best. Those of the council inclined to Mahometanism suggested that it was the best, because it had arrived first, and God Almighty, they said, would never have allowed error to come before truth—and the argument, however specious, prevailed. Now the Mahometans are making converts daily. Nothing is so common among the islands as crusades against the infidels — all who do not embrace Mahometanism are made slaves — considered as fair booty. May not therefore the spread of the Gospel go hand in hand with the Abolition of the slave trade in those countries?

I will write you, my dear sir, very fully and I hope satisfactorily on all these points after my arrival, and I

shall gladly avail myself of your permission to write without reserve.

The boat is putting off, and I must say farewell to you and my native land at one time. Accept my grateful thanks for all your kindness, and believe me always to remain, with veneration and affection,

Most sincerely yours,

THOS. RAFFLES.

ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Keswick, December 10, 1817.

My dear Sir,

I have just received a letter from Koster's sister, informing me that the consulship at Maranham is vacant.

A very erroneous notion has got abroad that I who live at the foot of Skiddaw, who associate more with the dead than with the living, and who have set my heart and hopes upon the next world — not upon this — am very much engaged in political affairs, and possess in consequence some political influence. This draws upon me a great deal of abuse, to which I am properly indifferent; but it induces likewise occasional applications from which I would willingly be spared.

In writing to you upon this occasion, I mean merely to say, that if this consulship at Maranham or any other similar situation in Brazil at any future time could be obtained for Henry Koster, the interests of the British

merchants and the honour of the British nation would be in safe, upright, and conscientious keeping. But I am perfectly aware that the claims upon you must be numerous, and the applications with which you are troubled ten times more so. And I am also aware that your parliamentary interest, when you might choose to exert it, is probably by no means commensurate with the weight which your opinion carries to the public: this being, I believe, far greater than that of any other individual.

I have looked with some anxiety for the letter of Mr. Pitt with which you promised to favour me. It is not I think from any clinging prejudice that I am unable to regard Mr. Pitt as a great statesman. His conduct of the war appears to me to have been miserable, and his domestic policy perilously erroneous in some momentous points—more especially in the Catholic question. I do, however, full justice to his intrepidity, his talents, and his English feeling—in which last and most essential quality for a British minister Mr. Fox was lamentably wanting. But I am better qualified to deliver an opinion upon Ignatius Loyola or George Fox, than upon either of these great leaders.

Perhaps you may have heard that I am writing (in truant hours, and yet with great diligence) a life of Wesley. It will be upon such a scale as to comprise a view of our religious history during the last fourscore years. I think it will not be read without interest, and I hope not without utility, sooner or later. I remember Wesley well: he laid his hands upon me when I was about six years old and blest me. It was a chance

meeting: I was going up the stairs of a lodging house at Bath, when he came out of one of the rooms, and was struck with my appearance. Farewell, my dear sir, and believe me,

Faithfully and most respectfully yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Keswick, January 3, 1818.

My dear Sir,

I return Lord Castlereagh's letter. Whatever may be the result of the application, both Koster and myself are equally indebted to you for this kindness. . . . .

That Mr. Pitt was a disinterested man I never doubted, nor that he was a man of great and extraordinary talents; I doubt the extent of his foresight, and the wisdom of many of his measures — perhaps there would be little difference in our opinions now that we must look back upon his administration as a part of past history. There is no likelihood of my moving southward during the present year. But I should be most glad to receive from you any information or hints respecting Wesley. I consider him as the most influential mind of the last century — the man who will have produced the greatest effects, centuries, or perhaps millenniums hence, if the present race of men should continue so long. The early excesses of Methodism I can account and allow for; I admire his tolerant and truly Catholic spirit; and I accord so far with his opinions, as they are expressed in

his latter years, that where he goes beyond me in his belief, I feel a conviction it is because I have not yet advanced far enough. For instance, I am as deeply and fully persuaded as he was, that the spirits of the departed are sometimes permitted to manifest themselves. There is a body of evidence upon this subject, which it is impossible for me to disbelieve; besides it is good that it should be so, and this with me (in such matters) is sufficient reason for concluding that it is probable — but it is also probable upon the strictest reasoning. But I do not believe in witchcraft, and very much doubt the reality of demoniacal possession. Even, however, if both were admitted, the absurd stories which he credits impeach his judgment, and consequently weaken the force of his authority when he is right. I shall very soon begin upon an essential and interesting part of the work — a view of the state of religion in this country from the Reformation to his time. Even now, after all the Methodists have done, and all they have caused the Church to do, there is no part of Christendom where the state of religion of the populace is so utterly neglected. The field is left fallow, and then we wonder to find that a more active spirit has been sowing tares! I am not surprised at the results of these late trials: they are a fit and proper sample of the consequences of Mr. Fox's law of libel. Whether there be courage enough to put that law upon its proper footing, *valde dubito!*

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours respectfully and truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ.

Elmdon House, Tuesday night,
July 28, 1818.

My dear Stephen,

Did I ever mention to you a certain Mr. ——, the son of a clergyman in Scotland, who came some few years back into this country, and was to be ordained after completing his education? There is a suspicion, whence arising I forget, if I ever heard, but I must say confirmed by a certain eccentricity both in his language and his written sentiments, and this I believe operated against him with some of the bishops who had been asked to ordain him. Ever since, this poor man has been keeping his head with difficulty above water. He is a complete bookworm, so completely such, that he spends his whole time in reading and writing, and seems to care little what it is he reads. Hence he has not a single friend or even acquaintance, those whom he first formed (the Seceding ministers, to whom he had been recommended) telling me when I applied to them to assist in raising a collection for him, "Sir, he has left us." Now, I might as well have left you to make out most of this yourself, and have begged you to see him and to judge whether it would not be worth while to let him have 20*l.* (if nothing can be done through other people), and be sent to Scotland. He is just of the stuff of which ushers in academies are made; but then he has so much of the Scotch cadence, that I really think few schoolmasters in this country would take him. Yet, poor creature, the man must not starve; and again

and again, when I have begun by telling him that he ought to support himself by the labour of his hands, that charity ought to be allotted to the decrepitude of age, or sickness, or the weakness of infancy, it has ended in my giving him money: He declares, and I believe truly, that he has gone about to all the places he could think of, asking for writing employment. Now in Scotland he would be in a place where his dialect and appearance would be less against him, and in the neighbourhood of his birth-place he would not be suffered to starve. I ought to have said that a respectable Scotch gentleman wrote to me two or three years ago, speaking of him as a worthy, well-meaning man. I will enclose you his last letter, and do you see him and judge what it may be best to do for him — my conscience is uneasy about him. I will acquiesce in any measure you approve. There is something the farthest in the world from the common cant of a beggar in his manner and language. He talks with you on the footing of an equal, which I own I rather like, though there is a sort of coarseness in him. — The most absurd thing I ever knew, was M.'s advising him to learn French: you must give the man a new set of organs, or he never can pronounce it — I must break off.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Monday evening.

My dear Wilberforce,

I return you Mr. R.'s letter: give by all means, give freely. I am only surprised you should have any doubts about it.

What! an erudite candidate for the first chair in Edinburgh, an Addison, in distress for a few paltry pounds, the only requisite for his rising to eminence as well as affluence, and you refuse him a supply! But so it is with you narrow-minded people. There is Mrs. W. now, with her ten brats, and her widow's weeds, and her religious enthusiasm, will move you more than all the efforts of a stout fellow, who, in spite of your former largesses, may have to lay down the pen, to the irreparable loss of science, (*proh pudor!*) and take up the flail or the mattock. What would posterity say to this if it had a tongue? But what care you for posterity? You say, I suppose, like the Irishman, posterity has done nothing for me; and why should I do any thing for it?

I however, will wash my hands of any participation in these mean-spirited maxims. I wrote to Mrs. W. to-day of your pecuniary offer. I will write to-morrow to retract it for you; for certainly all you can spare for Scotland ought to be reserved for this great and modern philosopher, Mr. R.

Yours very affectionately,

J. S.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO H. R. H. THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.

Elmdon House, near Birmingham, July 29, 1818.

Sir,

I should begin my letter by apologising to your Royal Highness for the freedom of this address, were it not for this consideration, that unless the motives by which I am prompted shall plead my excuse, it would be in vain for me to offer any other.

Happening, a few weeks ago, to have a *tête-à-tête* with a very intelligent gentleman, who had been for some time resident in the University of Gottingen, our conversation naturally turned upon the present state of that celebrated seat of learning: more especially I inquired concerning the prevailing opinions on the most important of all subjects, religion; and I learned with extreme concern, that a system of unqualified scepticism was maintained and diffused by one at least, if not by more, of the ablest and most accredited professors of the University; and that thereby, as formerly in Edinburgh, scepticism was become but too naturally the fashionable system among the young students. Unhappily, this conversation took place during the busiest part of the last session of parliament; and before I had another opportunity of conferring with the gentleman from whom I received the intelligence, he had left the kingdom. Had I been at all aware that I should see him no more I should have availed myself of the opportunity for obtaining more precise and complete information. But general and incomplete as my intelligence is, I conceived,

after much serious reflection, that I should not be acquitted of the duty I owe both to God and man, if I were not to use my best endeavours for arresting the progress of an evil, the fatal effects of which, if ever doubtful, cannot I think be questioned by any well informed man, who has traced the causes, and witnessed the effects of the French revolution.

It cannot be requisite for me to assure your Royal Highness that no man is less inclined than myself to interfere with the rights of private judgment; but when what professes itself to be a Christian seminary of education not only ceases to teach the wholesome truths of Christianity, but actually inculcates the lessons of scepticism, and when, therefore, the youth who have been sent by their parents to imbibe the principles of Christian truth, return to them after having drank deep of the noxious and bitter waters of infidelity, surely it becomes the duty of those whom Providence has invested with the requisite power, and thereby charged with a corresponding responsibility, to check an evil, the extent of which exceeds all human powers of calculation. At least, in common honesty, let mankind be no longer beguiled by false professions. Let the rising generation be no longer corrupted by infidel opinions, in the very seminary in which it might have been expected that they would be instructed in the doctrines and precepts of the Christian faith.

I need say no more. I cannot doubt from your Royal Highness's known character, and from the peculiar interest which you must naturally take, not merely in the credit, but in the real effects on mankind of that cele-

brated University, of which, from your residence in Hanover, your Royal Highness appears designed by Providence to be the superintendent and the guardian, that your Royal Highness will consider this subject with the seriousness which it so justly claims: and that though perhaps quietly, (which the nature of the case may probably render most expedient,) yet seriously, you will set yourself to ascertain the real amount of the evil, and to adopt some effectual remedy; a remedy, the effects of which shall not stop at merely preventing the diffusion of falsehood, but which shall provide for the inculcation of truth. Your Royal Highness's benevolence no less than your religion will here operate; for to your Royal Highness I am persuaded I need not remark, that if even the future interests of man were out of the question, every humane mind would be zealous for the establishment of Christianity, as at once the most compendious and most effectual method that ever was devised, for promoting the temporal improvement, and securing the social and domestic happiness of our fellow-creatures.

I will only express my humble hopes, that your Royal Highness will receive with indulgence a representation, which in truth I should scarcely have made, but for the personal esteem and attachment with which I have the honour to be, with great respect,

Sir,

Your Royal Highness's

Most obedient and faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bellevue, Bray, August 31, 1818.

My dear Sir,

Though I have almost forfeited my right of troubling you with a letter, I trust you will not be unwilling to hear from me. Again and again I have thought of writing; particularly, after receiving a kind mark of your remembrance in the cover of a letter from Mr. Jebb, when he was last in England. I assure you, I felt all the goodness to me which those few words expressed; and indifferent health, together with some special occupations alone, prevented my giving immediate vent to the grateful feelings which your kindness excited.

I am now induced to write to you by certain thoughts, which the reading of a very strange pamphlet has occasioned. It may or may not have fallen into your hands. If it has not, its singularity may be a reason why you should look into it. It is written by a London clergyman, "Vicar of St. Bartholomew the Less," and contains an express and earnest proposal that the Church of England should re-unite with the Church of Rome. He thinks if such an overture were made, it would be possible, by means of a council, to settle terms of ecclesiastical coalition; and he conceives this measure to be the only remedy for the religious dissonance now prevailing in England. He says, that through "the forgetfulness of all that constitutes a visible Church of Christ in constitution and discipline," there is in England, "the unhappy anomaly of an episcopal es-

tablishment and a sectarian population," and he thinks the growing weakness of the English Church can find adequate support only in an alliance with that great body, whose discipline, he imagines, is still entire, and therefore capable of sustaining unity of belief and practice.

A proposition of this nature, considered in itself, would not be worth a moment's attention. Like countless other foolish speculations, it would be sure speedily to vanish into thin air. But, as many well-intentioned persons feel similar apprehensions respecting the Church of England; and, not less than this writer, lament the growth of sectarianism, there is a possibility that they who express these feelings, and who complain that the active friends of religion are not sufficiently alive to the increasing danger, may be suspected to have, at bottom, some such leaning as he professes. Thus, deeper jealousy than even yet actuates would be excited, and co-operation against common enemies set at greater distance than ever.

But to come nearer to my special point: when I recollect what I have said to you, or what you may have happened to know of my sentiments, respecting the Roman Catholic question, and when I consider how possible it is, that through mere want of caution I may have so pleaded their political cause, as to expose myself to the suspicion of being over-indulgent to their religion, especially, as I have never appeared among the friends of Bible or Missionary Societies; on these accounts, I have not been wholly without fear, that if you happened to think of me, while looking over this pamphlet, it might by possibility appear to you not unlikely

that my opinions were in some sort of agreement with its sentiments, and that, were I also to speak my whole mind, I too might be found at least not adverse to his extraordinary speculation.

Will you forgive me for supposing the possibility of my occupying such a place in your mind, as the occurrence of what I am imagining would imply? If I am safe from such a suspicion, in consequence of me and my ways of thinking being comparatively forgotten by you, I cannot but desire to re-excite your recollection, by bringing myself before you. If I still live in your memory, and you think better of me than to class me with such persons, you will, notwithstanding, receive with your accustomed kindness the few thoughts which I am led to communicate on this, certainly, not wholly uninteresting subject.

I certainly, perhaps not less than this writer himself, apprehend the Church of England to be in imminent danger; and while I am satisfied that the anti-evangelical party, by way of defending the Church, are doing every thing possible to increase its hazards and almost to insure its downfal, I am obliged to think, that the measures pursued by those who are called evangelical, however upright in intention, and even fitted to multiply instances of individual piety, are not exactly such as are calculated to avert the impending evil. I make this remark, not for the purpose of obtruding my private opinion, but in order to express with greater satisfaction to myself, what is, if possible, still more deeply my conviction, that the Church of England might as well be annihilated at once as reunited to the Church

of Rome, and that of all possible projects which could be devised by the wayward will of man, that of such a re-union is the wildest and most pernicious.

You never would have agreed with me as far as you have done, respecting the Roman Catholic question, if you had not felt that to befriend Roman Catholic enfranchisement was not by any just consequence to countenance their religion. I dare say you have not been less persuaded than myself, that politically to excommunicate the Roman Catholics is to condense and brace them as a separate religious body, and what has long impressed me, will, therefore, to you also probably appear not unreasonable; that if Providence means, for mysterious reasons, still to keep up the Roman Catholic interest in Ireland, the present disqualifying statutes will remain yet longer in force; whereas, if its dissolution or reformation be a near purpose of over-ruling wisdom, the Roman Catholics will, doubtless, be brought within those liberalising influences which full enfranchisement would imply, and which, in the nature of things, they could no more resist, for any length of time, than the ice of winter can resist the increasing warmth of spring. In fact, it has seemed to me, that their religion in this country was so much more kept together, by our compression than by its own cohesion; that if only we had courage to make the experiment, we should shortly find that it had owed its chief strength to our fears, not to its own firmness. I particularly think that those who should obtain seats in either House must become more and more like others of the same rank; and though the first possessors of these

distinctions might professedly retain their original habits, they could not, however they might wish it, entail their prejudices on their children. New habits both of mind and manners would be formed by new circumstances; and to a moral certainty, if not the son, the grandson of every Roman Catholic member of either House would be a Protestant. Let me add one more conjecture: when several such cases should occur, it would be impossible that the Roman Catholic clergy should not become alarmed; and to retain their flock, they would, in all probability, think of the sole expedient within their power, the recommending of their system by some little infusion of rationality, as, for instance, exchanging the Latin for English service, and giving the sacrament of the Eucharist in both kinds. But were alteration thus far admitted, it would go on; concession would increase instead of satisfying demands, and an actual reformation of the Irish Roman Catholic Church, leading at length to a coalition with our reformed Episcopal Church, would be the issue.

Whether or no, therefore, your speculations look as far forward as mine, I should be pretty sure that my political views alone would not expose me in your judgment to the being classed with the writer of this pamphlet. But should you have happened to read the appendix to Mr. Jebb's sermons (which in a prefixed advertisement is stated, both as to "authorities and arguments," to have been the work jointly of himself and of a friend), and to recollect the use made of Vincentius Lirinensis, a writer of the fifth century, it might strike you, on looking into this gentleman's pamphlet, as

rather extraordinary, not only that he places this same writer in the very front of his authorities, but actually appears to ground himself on the identical passage which is especially referred to in the appendix. I confess I should not wonder that this circumstance, if adverted to and not examined beyond the first impression, should excite a suspicion that the appendix and the pamphlet breathed the same spirit, and were directed, with whatever difference of manner, to the same object.

But if chance should have led you, my dear sir, to notice this apparent coincidence of quotation, I would wish you to be apprized of the fact, that in the judgment of Mr. Jebb and myself there is not any firmer ground on which to attack the very citadel of the Roman Catholic system, than that which is afforded by this same passage of Vincentius as adduced by us, but of which the author of the pamphlet, whether through design or inadvertence, has only transcribed as much as appeared to him suited to his special purpose.

It is, indeed, the object of Vincentius to persuade his readers that the depth and extent of Holy Scripture are such, as to place it, in many instances, beyond the reach of private interpretation; and that, in order safely to explain what appears dark or disputable in the Divine Word, we must consult the concurrent judgment of the Catholic church; or, as he himself expresses it, "*quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est.*" This maxim of Vincentius, in its first general statement, the writer of the pamphlet has thought fit to adduce as if it supported his project. But Vincentius goes on to decide (and Mr. Jebb and I have dwelt at least as much

on this latter part as on the first general principle), that if the body of the existing church should at any time appear to deviate from its original purity of doctrine, then and in that case it would be not the right only, but, as far as capacity went, the duty of each individual Christian, not to follow a multitude to do evil, but in defiance of prevalent example to regulate his own belief by the guidance of uncorrupted antiquity.

I believe you will see at once that this sequel of Vincentius's doctrine (which he has thought proper to omit) is as much as possible the very antipode of popery — or rather, a solvent principle before which the entire system would instantly come to nothing. The papal palladium is implicit subjugation of the individual to the existing rulers of the church. The private Christian, according to the popish belief, has no right to inquire for himself. He is deemed a virtual heretic if he makes any such attempt. He must receive whatever his clerical guides propound without appeal or hesitation. Consequently the Roman Catholic who should follow the advice of Vincentius in searching for ancient truth and adhering to it, against the dictates of modern church-despotism, would forthwith incur the anathema of his superiors, and be considered as a deserter from the ranks of the faithful.

This remark is too obvious to need confirmation; but it would be confirmed were it needful by the well known fact that Bp. Ridley, in the dispute at Oxford, supports his conduct as a reformer by this identical passage: — "I use," said he, "the wise counsel of Vincentius Lirinensis, whom I am sure you will allow: who, giving

precepts how the Catholic church may be in all schisms and heresies known, writeth in this manner: 'When,' saith he, 'one part is corrupted with heresies, then prefer the whole world before that part; but if the greatest part be infected, then prefer antiquity.'"

Had this writer, therefore, examined more closely the author on whom he places reliance — had he even read to the end the passage which he quotes, if his mind be capable of conviction, he would have been disabused; at least, if he be a man of conscience, he would not have adduced Vincentius Lirinensis as favouring a measure against which he has pronounced the plainest and most decisive protest that could have been expressed in human language.

In fact, the case is too clear to leave room for argument. A Roman Catholic is, *ipso facto*, incapable of performing what Vincentius regards as the essential duty of every intelligent Christian. Whoever, therefore, becomes a Roman Catholic, once for all precludes himself from what Vincentius enjoins as the only resource against widely infectious error; or if, being within the pale of that church, he notwithstanding resolves to act as Vincentius has directed, he violates the vital principle of his religion, and is consequently a Roman Catholic no longer.

I believe I have said enough to show that in this apparent sameness of quotation there is the utmost difference both of manner and intention; and that whether Vincentius's leading principle be in itself true or false, neither he nor the authors of the appendix can be justly involved in the censures to which the writer of the pamphlet has made himself liable. Truth, however,

obliges me to remark that all the matter contained in the pamphlet is not, in my judgment, alike exceptionable. In several instances the quotations strike me as interesting and important. I speak, however, exclusively of those which relate to the doctrine of the Eucharist, and to the leading tenet of Vincentius—the use of unbroken Catholic tradition in interpreting the obscurities of the written word. On these two subjects there are passages quoted from Church of England authors, which I conceive applicable to infinitely safer and wiser purposes than that which they are so strangely and inconsequently brought to support.

It is, I confess, my settled persuasion, that the piety of the English Church has been deeply chilled by the prevalence of those low notions respecting the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which were first made popular by the well known work of Bishop Hoadley. I sincerely wish, therefore, this important subject were more closely and dispassionately investigated than it has yet been. The issue, I conceive, would be a view of that sacred ordinance, alike removed from the frigidness of Zuinglianism and the monstrous absurdity of a literal transubstantiation. It seems to have been the pious purpose of those who revised the Communion Service in 1662 to lead the mind to this idea: I mean to inspire, substantially, the sentiment which Bishop Ridley expressed in his reply to Dr. Seton's question, "Where is then the miracle, if Christ be present through grace and efficacy only?" "Yes," answered Ridley; "there is a miracle, good sir. Christ is not idle in His sacraments. Is not the miracle great, trow you, when bread,

which is wont to sustain the body, becometh food to the soul? He that understandeth not that miracle, he understandeth not the force of that mystery." This intention of the revisers, though, doubtless, not without effect on the feelings of communicants, will be distinctly understood only by comparing the altered form with the service as it stood before 1662; and particularly by observing the several rubrics which were then inserted. On such a comparison, I conceive, it will be obvious, that the idea meant to be conveyed exactly agrees with what Bishop Horseley has expressed in one of his charges — that the Eucharist is not merely "a rite of simple commemoration," but that "the matter of the Sacrament is by Christ's appointment, and the operation of the Holy Ghost, the vehicle of grace to the believer's soul." For my part I receive this view, because I cannot otherwise interpret St. Paul's deep expressions in the xth and xith of 1 Corinthians; and I cannot help thinking that low ideas on this point are a cause why books written on the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper are seldom, if ever, either satisfactory to the understanding or impressive on the heart.

I am aware that what my friend Jebb and I have said respecting the use of Catholic tradition in interpreting Scripture has been received with great jealousy. But surely, on this head, there can be no danger in admitting what has been admitted by Chillingworth and Tillotson. The judgment of these two celebrated divines, on Catholic tradition, will be found in the 77th page of the pamphlet. As far as I understand, Tillotson's words, as there given, convey

the precise opinion of Mr. Jebb and myself; and we do not go the length of Chillingworth. Universal tradition, according to Chillingworth, when clearly authenticated is to be followed in every thing "fundamental or not fundamental;" whereas, in our judgment, it is to have force respecting fundamentals only; subordinate matters, as we conceive, being not only alterable, but from change of times and circumstances, often requiring alteration. It is remarkable that Vincentius makes this very distinction, "The ancient consent of the holy fathers," says he, "is to be investigated and followed by us with earnest application of mind; not, however, in all the minuter questions of the divine law, but only or at least chiefly respecting the rule of faith." Here again, I cannot but observe, Vincentius calls individual Christians to a discriminative exercise of mind, and by inevitable consequence ascribes to them a right of inquiry as opposite to Roman Catholic principles as light is to darkness.

In troubling you with these remarks, I am far from hoping to recommend the view of my friend and myself to your acceptance. I merely wish, by pointing out the contrariety between the system of the pamphlet and ours, to avert the possibility of our being involved in any cloud of suspicion which may be excited by its frantic suggestion. At the same time it is but candid to own, that the more we consider the subject, the more solid, to our mind, appears the ground on which we have taken our stand. Against Roman Catholics in particular we conceive it to be impregnable. It was the ground on which Ridley combated his opponents, and which all their

subtilty could not induce him to relinquish. We can here turn against our enemies those very weapons of which they make their proudest boast. We can here demonstrate, upon our side, the reality of that certainty and continuity, by the semblance of which they have been so long entrapping the unlearned and the unstable.

We cannot but persuade ourselves that the growing dissonancies in religion, (which, in point of fact, are undeniable,) and the increasing cries of "Lo, Christ is here," and "Lo, Christ is there," will at length dispose the truly upright of heart to pant after some more settled order of things than recent times have exemplified. The jar of words and the conflicts of parties will evince the necessity of some certain rallying point where an effectual stand may be made against the presumption of novices, and the wiles of the deceitful. If such a post of safety be not discoverable, how are the contests of the religious world to terminate? My friend and I think that it is to be found in the written word of God, not as interpreted for himself by each ignorant or self-conceited individual, but as illustrated by the converging rays of those who have been successively lights in their generations. "The opinions," says Vincentius, "are to be collected of those fathers alone, who with holiness, wisdom, and constancy, living, teaching, and persevering in the Catholic faith and communion, have enjoyed the privilege of dying in Christ faithfully, or of dying for Christ happily."

It seems to us that to trace out this concurrence is, in reality, to recur to God's work, for elucidation of His

word. Such persons as Vincentius describes were what they were through the operation of the Divine Spirit; the virtues in which they excelled were the fruit of that Spirit; and the concordant principles by which that fruit was nourished and matured could be no other than rills and rivulets of that river which proceedeth from the throne of God and of the Lamb. What then is the unbroken agreement of results and principles, in this most interesting retrospect, but, in a sober sense, the witness of the Divine Spirit to His own truth? If, therefore, it has in any instance pleased that blessed Spirit to speak obscurely, can we do more wisely than to examine how the same adorable agent has wrought, in order that the principles of heavenly chemistry delivered in the written word may be explained, by the practice of the allwise Artist in the laboratory of His Church? Thus, we conceive unity of sentiment, on the very matters which now divide Christians, to be rationally and luminously attainable — and it is our persuasion that it will be attained — for our Saviour's prayer cannot always remain unanswered: sooner or later Christians will be one, that the world may believe; and perfected in one, that the world may know.

Then I think it will be, that the apocalyptic call will be specially addressed to those now held captive in the mystical Babylon — "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her plagues." And when, through that call, every living particle, in which the spiritual breath of God is, has been extracted from the now mixed concrete of the Roman Catholic Church, it is my belief that the incorrigible residium will be the

victim of those maledictions prefigured by the seven vials, none of which, I conceive, according to the tenour of the apocalyptic prophecy, shall be poured out, until the season of vengeance has fully come. Adieu, my dear sir. I determined not to exceed two sheets. I am now, therefore, forced to set you free, and I entreat you to believe me,

Always faithfully, affectionately, and gratefully
Yours,
ALEX. KNOX.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO H. BANKES, ESQ.

Rydal, near Ambleside, September 8, 1818.

My dear Bankes,

It is true here I am! but owing to unavoidable detentions, we are only very recently arrived; and though the climate of this country is, in the valleys, milder, I am persuaded, than in most parts of England, yet the delight I feel in reviewing my old haunts is not unmixed with regret for the bright and warm sunshine which I am assured was enjoyed in this lake country not less than in most other parts, though it is difficult to believe it, for never was the verdure more exquisite than it is at this moment. But in the very short time we already have been here, we have had several wet days; yet it is so dry immediately after rain, and the waterfalls become so much finer, that perhaps we gain more than we lose by the showers. I have begun to have Madame de Staël read to me, and

with all the disadvantages of a translation, and I suspect a very indifferent one, and of not reading it with my own eyes, I must say I am extremely struck with it; I had no idea that she possessed so much sound political judgment, combined with considerable shrewdness in discernment of the characteristic traits of human nature in different classes and individuals. How clever are her remarks on the courtier minister, and how skilfully she slides over the weaker parts of her father's character. How much better and more true are her principles than those of our modern factious reformers.

And now I must notice your domestic ecclesiastical occurrence* — I am sure I should be void of all feeling, if I could be uninterested in what so nearly concerns you, who have never failed to take an interest wherever my feelings were in question, and who, through all the changes of public life, have always treated me with the cordiality of true friendship. But you have touched a string, which often, I assure you, vibrates inwardly in my heart, though I believe too seldom I let the sound escape to outward observation. To speak without a figure, both in relation to you and yours, more especially to my godson, I have not seldom had many a serious rumination, and I have quarrelled with myself for not opening my mind to you enough, on the most interesting of all subjects. I have not eyesight to allow me to put on paper what I might otherwise wish to say on this head. But a few words I will state, and I will give you a microscopic view of a work which I have long been intending to write. I am not sure that I did not

* Mr. Bankes's youngest son had just received holy orders.

once name it to you, for it is a design, though unexecuted and even uncommenced, of many years' standing. The main purpose would be to enforce the duty of a diligent and attentive perusal of the writings of St. Paul. Though all the New Testament, claiming the same title to be received as of divine authority, should doubtless be studied seriously, yet every fair reasoner must admit, and on the very ground of deference to divine authority, that the writings of St. Paul have a peculiarly strong claim to our most serious perusal — because he was expressly commissioned to be the apostle and instructor of us Gentiles, and this when he himself wished rather to go to teach his countrymen the Jews. Our Saviour Himself, in His last discourse with His disciples, stated, that there were truths which had been hitherto withheld from them, but in which they would be instructed, after the descent of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth as He is called, when they should be guided into all truth. One great distinction was specified by our Saviour Himself, when He states that in future all their prayers should be offered up through His mediation, which He remarked had never been the case before. And it is intimated that the instruction should be in those particulars which respected our Saviour Himself — I am not here alluding to mysterious still less to speculative matters, but to what is practical and plain as connected with practice, though high and inscrutable in its nature and relations.

I am persuaded, that from the neglect of St. Paul's writings has proceeded, in a great degree, an erroneous view of the spirit and genius of Christianity, which has

the most important practical effects; especially in what concerns the formation of those dispositions of heart which are to qualify us for that future state of existence into which we are to pass hereafter. Of one thing I am sure, that any solicitude I feel for you is not of an uncharitable kind, as such anxiety is sometimes charged with being; but is of a friendly character and nature, proceeding from the interest I take in your well-being. It was one of our great men, I forget which, our great literati I mean of two centuries ago, who said, if he had another year to live, he would employ it in two things — one of them being the perusal of St. Paul's Epistles, the other I have forgotten. I wish you would engage in the same occupation. But then it must be a serious and a scholar-like perusal, accompanied, I should say, with fairness, on the authority of the Scripture itself, with prayers for the divine illumination, not to reveal new truths, but to impress those which the word of God contains, more especially also endeavouring to let Scripture be its own interpreter, by comparing one part with another, and observing that it will often happen, that where there are some unconquerable difficulties, there may be other truths sufficiently clear for practice.

Farewell, my dear Bankes. How little did I suppose I should be drawn into so long a letter. But I too seldom write to you, as I too seldom see you, not from want of disposition, but of ability.

With kind remembrance and every good wish,

I am ever your affectionate friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO H. BANKES, ESQ.

Rydal, near Kendal, September 23, 1818.

My dear Bankes,

By all means read Paley's Horæ Paulinæ. Of all his ingenious, and interesting, and able works, it is certainly the most ingenious, and though the idea of its principle be not quite original (for it was brought forward by Dr. Doddridge in his Exposition in a degree quite sufficient to suggest to Paley's acute intellect the use that might be made of it), yet it is so extended and applied by Paley, as to entitle him to as great a degree of praise, even for invention, as most of our great inventors can fairly claim. For whether in Jenner's case, or any others, you always find on inquiry, that there was some one or other, who had done the same thing, or something very like it. Paley's work delivers several of St. Paul's Epistles and the book called the Acts of the Apostles into your hands as the works of a divinely commissioned teacher; for, as I remember, Butler argues, if you admit the authenticity of several of the Epistles, that for instance of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, the supernatural powers of the Apostle Paul, and of the Christians to whom he wrote, follows of course. As to the question—What commentator? I am clear myself that Doddridge is the best. There is in him the least of that disposition, so common in commentators, but so censurable, to strain passages unfairly for the support of their own system. As for the order of reading the Epistles of St. Paul, I see no better than that in which

they stand, unless perhaps that it might be well to read the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is supposed to be his, if not the first, yet pretty early. But I must add, (though honestly to confess it to you, as an old friend, I had rather have kept it to myself,) in what way soever you begin the Epistles, prayer for the divine blessing on the perusal should precede the reading of them.

I will make one more remark. That it is much to be regretted, as I remember telling our poor old friend ——, when we were *tête-à-tête* in a chaise in one of the beautiful valleys I was showing him when he visited me at the house I had near Windermere, that people will be always bringing forward and disputing about the high and mysterious doctrines of religion, and hence persons see Christianity or rather the Christian Scriptures through their medium. This was just his case; and I well remember when he said to me, "How can I believe that the Maker of all creation became a little infant?" I replied to him, "No more could I if I did as you do, that is, view the arguments for Christianity as embodied in the arguments for that proposition. But act rationally, examine and weigh the arguments and evidences on which the truths of Christianity and of the Holy Scriptures rest, and then estimate, after satisfying yourself that the infancy of Christ the Son of God is in the Holy Scriptures, whether all the above arguments and evidence are to be set aside and overbalanced, by the improbability of this single position." My dear Bankes, I ought not perhaps to have written so hastily on this important subject; but feeling for you the regard I do, and grateful as I am for our long and uniform friend-

ship, I cannot but feel very desirous that you should in earnest give your understanding and your heart (for both must be surrendered) to the serious investigation of these important truths, and follow and obey practically the course they would prescribe to you. May the divine blessing accompany your studies, and still more, the more difficult practical task that remains behind in the bringing, as the Apostle expresses it, into the obedience of Christ the heart and the tempers, the dispositions, the thoughts, words, and actions.

My eyes have been for some time complaining in their way, and I must release them. This country never was more beautiful: there has not been any want of rain, though the summer was here, as Southey says, "a good old-fashioned English summer, such as we had when I used to pick grapes out of my grandmother's bedroom window." Farewell, with kind remembrances,

Ever yours sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Kensington Gore, Wednesday evening, November, 1818.

My dear Wilberforce,

I have to ask your pardon for not forwarding this cover to-day. I meant to have written to you re-

speeting that sad, sad event* in Russell Square; but the morning papers have detailed all I could have told. I have not recovered my spirits from the shock. What a disheartening blow to our poor cause! There could not have been a greater loss, except in yourself. My feelings have been the more painful, because, perhaps, had I not postponed a purpose that I formed on hearing of Lady Romilly's death, I might have saved him. I had not heard of, but could well estimate his sufferings. I meant therefore to write to him, giving him an account of my own severer trials (that of 1796 he would have allowed to be so), and using all the topics I could to comfort him, if not on the true principles, on such as were not wrong, and he was likely to feel; especially animating him with the prospect of doing much for the poor negroes, and urging him to take care of himself for their sakes. Who knows what this, and the warm expression of sympathy from an unexpected quarter, might have effected? It might have turned the scale for life; but I waited for time to do the thing well, not knowing that he had returned to town till I heard of the sad catastrophe. Alas, alas! what a world is this! or rather what would it be without the hope of heaven! Poor Romilly, the description of his state strikes me with forcible and strange recollections. In 1796 I really believe my case was almost identically the same. I have often said, and am strongly impressed with the belief, that I did not sleep for a week; and strange things passed through my mind which I recollect at times with

* The death of Sir Samuel Romilly.

a doubt whether it was in a state of sanity. Yet friends for the most part might think me composed. You, my dear W., who were very and most seasonably kind, probably saw nothing to the contrary. But the heart knoweth its own sorrows. Happily I had always too much fear of God to think of suicide for a moment. Affectionate respects to all at Yoxall Lodge. . . . .

EDWARD JERNINGHAM, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Lincoln's Inn, November 25, 1818.

My dear Sir,

I think it proper, that I should make known to you the result of a meeting, which took place yesterday, of the Committee of the Board of British Catholics.

The lamented death of our much respected Advocate Mr Elliott, has turned the eyes and hearts of our whole body towards you, and I can sincerely say, that it is a sentiment which has united us all.

It is intended, that a deputation should wait upon you, as soon as you return to town, and the reason of my making you this previous, unofficial, and private communication is, that I may add my individual request and hope, that you will not deem the petition of a body like that of the British Catholics unworthy of your high and far-famed reputation, as the generous and common advocate of the oppressed throughout the Christian world.

With respect to the form of the petition intended to be presented this next session of Parliament by the Catholics of Great Britain, I have taken the liberty of forwarding you a printed copy of the one presented in the session of 1816, and which the Committee of our Board are desirous of re-adopting.

I have the honour to be, my dear Sir,
With the highest sentiments of respect
and consideration,
Your obedient servant,
EDWARD JERNINGHAM.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Temple of Peace, Wendover Dean Hill,
September 7, 1819.

My dear Wilberforce,

I am at length fairly settled here in that compendious magnificence of style which has been celebrated by some eminent poet (I forget his name) in heroic French measure, —

" A cobbler there was, and he lived in a stall," &c.;

but I have improved on the architectural skill of that illustrious descendant of Prince Crispin; for a single room here actually serves me not only for " parlour and kitchen and hall," but for bedroom, library, store room, cellar, and pantry. It is on the ground, and without a

window shutter, so that should any of the wild Buckingham mountaineers that "inhabit lax" in the woods and commons on my flanks and rear (and a gaunt ruffian-looking race they are) think it a "good thing" to rob and murder a Master in Chancery, they have nothing to do but open the window and jump in, unless they prefer kicking in a rotten door panel. I have, however, got a few boards nailed together to put up against my window at night, which would require a blow to beat them in loud enough to wake me, and I have my trusty carbine with a spring bayonet ready loaded at my bedside. Moreover, I take care to apprise all cruisers in my neighbourhood that they will find some risk in boarding, by firing morning and evening guns. You may insure me, therefore, perhaps at a small war premium.

Now if you or any body should ask what I can find here to repay me for the privations of such a hermitage, I answer, "Come and see." If any man can look unmoved at the grandeur and varied beauties of the extensive landscape before me, let him stick to his carpeted drawing-rooms in town! But perhaps he may like better the picturesque and the sheltered loveliness of nature, fertile little highland valleys, where corn fields and verdant commons that have yet escaped the Vandal enclosing acts are shut in by eminences crowned and fringed with luxuriant beech woods. Then let him walk with me one furlong only from my hermitage into my back grounds, and he shall enter into scenes to his choice; and in a walk of four or five miles to Missenden, &c. find such a variety of them that he will be at a loss to say which charmed him the most. Or does the

luxuriantly beautiful and rich... a prospect extensive but not vast, a panorama the most distant lines of which are not remote enough to be obscure, but defining with vivid and varied tints the extremity of the horizon... I say, does a landscape like this delight him? then let him go on with me to the verge of these uplands till the valley of Missenden bursts upon him, and descend as I did this morning from the heights that overhang that town, with the sun basking on their sides, and on the hills that front them.

But I am very bad at description, though not at admiration of these things. I have no pencil; but I have eyes, ay, and I have lungs too, and legs, and the former inhale with delight the cool and fragrant air around me, while the latter are exercised with more than wonted pleasure here, and with perfect exemption from fatigue, for I find what is rarely found on the uplands, a great extent of level ground in various directions. I can defy the sun, my great enemy, even in my noontide walks, and in the hottest weather. Indeed, if I could not, it would only keep me from emerging from the beech woods, which you know scarcely ever present the obstacle of impervious underwood, or at least always have abundance of long alleys where you are completely canopied, and yet with gleams here and there of sunshine, enough to dry the ground and exhale the fragrance. You know I always loved this country for that distinguishing feature (I wish Castlereagh had not spoiled the word) of hills crowned with beech; but I never liked it more than now, and in this particular situation. It is to the eye the best season, the autumnal

tints just beginning to diversify the foliage. A Christian should have other localities to interest him than even those which lead us in our happiest hours to pious joy and holy admiration.

> " These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
> Almighty! Thine this universal frame
> Thus wondrous fair! Thyself how wondrous then!"

Better also than those which by obvious analogies or associations incline to high and virtuous contemplations: —

> " Behold him seated on a mount serene,
> Above the fogs of sense and passion's storm;
> All the black cares and tumults of this life
> Like harmless thunders breaking at his feet:"

for these things may be thought and said, ay, and felt too, by abject souls. But blessed charity and active persevering zeal in our Master's service, these are the great points, and we should choose places and every thing by them. He, too, loved the uplands, but He went up to a mountain to pray, and on a mountain He taught His disciples.

Really in this respect I hope to be benefited, and that not only by solitude, but the hill air itself, which commonly assists my spirits and quickens a little my dull intellectual powers. Here I have brought materials for the active usefulness I may best attempt — my *slave-grubbing*. I have also brought, what you thought might be advantageously substituted for or connected with it, the book containing materials for the life of our dear and excellent departed friend H. Thornton.

I have not been able, at least have not found oppor-

tunity, to read it till yesterday evening, and have not yet finished it; but have now a pretty good general view of the degree of assistance that might be found in it for a work of that kind. Its materials would go some way, but are not perhaps a tenth part of what we should want of fact, and of accurate chapter-and-verse fact, as to his private history. Public materials as to Sierra Leone, &c. might, no doubt, be easily got, and you could supply much if you should sit down to do so, getting somebody to minute down the facts you think a history of his life should contain. But a formidable difficulty presents itself to my mind as to your being his biographer or even his co-biographer in a work you avowed, or were known to have concurred in giving to the public. His public history runs so much parallel to your own, and you appear in so great a degree to have been instrumental in fixing his general political principles and conduct, that in doing justice to him you would seem to be praising yourself. He says himself in one place, "My intimacy with Wilberforce has had an influence on many important events of my life." In other places, which I cannot so easily turn to, he particularises cases in which you were the chief author of several of his actions in parliament and his scheme of conduct there, &c. as well as (what the above extract refers to) your persuading him to take the lead in the affairs of Sierra Leone. To explain and justify his general line of conduct as "one of the party of no-party men," would in effect be like stating and defending your own. But you have perhaps thought of and have an answer to this objection.

I should not feel the same difficulties. Perhaps even my defence of that line of parliamentary conduct would not be the less impressive as coming from me, especially as I should at the same time maintain stoutly that my own different line of conduct (I mean the different line of conduct which readers, perhaps, might remember to have been mine,) is equally justifiable when dictated by right motives, and qualified by proper limitations. My opinion has been long settled that though to have a few middle men or neutrals is not only consistent with, but in a high degree useful to, the well working of the constitutional machine, and that to be one of these is highly becoming and right in a man of independent fortune, and the representative of a popular body; yet that a large infusion of such members would be fatal to the constitution, (as certainly so as universal suffrage itself, perhaps,) unless they should agree to give up particular opposition to measures they thought prudentially wrong, for the sake of general support to a government they thought right in the main; *i. e.* in other words, unless they renounced their own maxims, the maxims on which Babington always and inexorably acted, on which H. T. most commonly acted, and on which you have acted pretty uniformly of late, and took the very line of conduct which I endeavoured in general to pursue, though not, I am conscious, with undeviating consistency. Indeed my case was a difficult one, beyond even the ordinary situation of men brought in by the existing government, because Mr. Perceval was in circumstances to feel deeply the prejudice which the opposition of a known personal friend, as well as partisan in Parliament,

always tends to produce. In many cases I was restrained by this feeling. It prevented my voting and speaking too against the Duke of York in Mrs. Clarke's business, and made me think it enough not to vote at all. In short, I think that I could do justice to H. T.'s public conduct without condemning my own, though you could not, perhaps, without praising your own.

Another difficulty, however, that occurred to me sooner, applies equally to us both, if not exclusively to me. Would it not be insincere, and have the effect of hypocrisy, if a biographer were to state the religious tenets of a man whom he generally holds up as an object of imitation and praise, without noticing his own dissent from them, where they are different from his own. I am not sure, however, that you have any such difference to avow or conceal. I certainly thought his opinions and yours were much alike. But I have come to a part in which he states himself, to my surprise, to be a Calvinist, and in reference, I think, to predestination, only qualifying by saying that he does not hold it of such importance as Dr. Milner does, or something to that effect. Now I doubt whether you could go so far, or rather I am confident you could not. As to my own difficulties on this subject, they would be wider, as I need not tell you.

After all, the grand difficulty with me is to decide whether my duties to the African cause, or rather the West Indian slave cause, can be reconciled with such an undertaking.

I am, my dear W.,

Ever very affectionately yours,

J. S.

Pray do not send any long answer to this, unless you can employ another pen than your own. A few words will do. Address to me "Post-office, Wendover, Bucks." (Observe, —not the "Temple of Peace.") I know not whether you are aware of the cause of this appellation. Mr. O., by whose courtesy I occupy this room, bought the Temple of Peace exhibited in the park on the occasion of the peace, and has actually been foolish enough to hoist it on the carcass of an unfinished house, contiguous to the room I occupy.

If we should have a thunder-storm, I shall be afraid of it as a conductor, for this is the very summit of the hills, and it rises to a great height above the building, with the flag-staff at its four corners;—as to the flags, they are all blown away.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO RALPH CREYKE, ESQ.

Near London, January 7, 1820.

My dear Sir,

I should be dishonest if I were not to confess that I was almost sorry to see your handwriting this morning; at least, for it was no more, I wished the arrival of your letter had been delayed till to-morrow :— for I had intended to write to you to-day, and should have so done a week ago, but for my having been indisposed—very inopportunely; for I was unable to attend our discussions, when they were most interesting, on the Libel Bill. Our debates are not what they once were. I am myself, indeed, arrived at such a period, at least of

parliamentary life, very near forty years, as to have become

Laudator temporis acti
Se puero ——

But without any such prejudice, we contend in a lower region than when Pitt and Fox, or North and Fox and Burke, were the combatants; not but that Canning displays as much talent, and, with one exception, is as finished an orator as I ever heard. But yet—when he is at his best, I am always admiring Canning—when Pitt and Fox were in full song, they were themselves forgotten, and the hearer was hurried along by the torrent, without having leisure to ask by what name it was distinguished, or to estimate the height or the swell or the rapidity of the current.

But I blame myself for not first having assured you that I can sympathise with you on your family loss; of which your letter gives me the first intimation.

* * * * * * *

I hope you in the East Riding are suffering less than in any other part almost of England; for I am concerned to say that the pressure at present is not on the manufacturers only. Yet I believe that if the object were to benefit them, there is no way by which that object could be so securely effected as by improving the condition of the agriculturist. Our home market is far more important to us than any foreign market, perhaps, indeed certainly, more important to us than all our foreign markets put together. Did you ever scrutinise so as thoroughly to settle your judgment on that delicate question which respects our currency and paper credit?

But, alas! my eyes have been admonishing me to forbear, and therefore I must draw towards a conclusion. And how naturally (as you go back at last to the same key note in music from which you set out) does my mind revert to our domestic concerns, which touch us more to the quick by far, or rather enter our heart's core more deeply, and were so intended to do by the great Creator of all things, than all matters which have their places, however important, in outer circles. Another young man, also of Trinity, was carried off, not very long ago, quite unexpectedly. I have been much struck with the circumstance of my having survived so many of my contemporaries. I well remember the late Dr. Warren declaring in the spring of 1788 that I had no stamina at all, and could not live more than a few weeks. Yet both he and poor Pitcairne, one of the strongest-limbed men I ever beheld, are gone many years ago, and I apparently stronger than I was at that time! How strange is it, that with these striking lessons, so strongly enforced on us of the uncertainty of life, we should see the greater part of mankind around us, if not firmly believing, yet still farther from decidedly disbelieving, the great truths which the Scriptures state of what is to follow, yet sailing down the stream with much less care concerning the grand decisive issue, than about any other reversionary possession which is of any considerable value! But I may check my surprise at this, and change my phrase of seeing others thus comparatively indifferent about what they would themselves acknowledge to be infinitely important. I myself feel this same discrepancy between the decision of the understanding, the

conclusion of the judgment, and the feeling of the heart; and it is by labour and effort that I enforce on my affections the practical inferences from propositions which intellectually I recognise as true and even unquestionable. Indeed to have acquired the habit of living under this impression of the reality of eternal things is to be spiritually minded; and it is a temper I believe which can be produced by no unassisted human efforts, but of which we shall never remain destitute for want of heavenly aid, if we pursue the course prescribed in Scripture for the attainment of it. May you and I, my dear sir, possess this just estimate of things more and more! I must say that I become more and more convinced from experience, that where it does predominate in its just and proper bearing, it tends to render men better in every state and relation of life. How naturally we pour forth our stream of thought, when we address a friend either in conversation or on paper; yet my stream has been so often arrested in its course from frequent interruptions, that when set a flowing again, with all the intervening mass of matters filling the channel, I wonder if it has preserved its identity; if it has, it is like one of the rivers we read of, which runs through a lake, and issues the same from the opposite extremity. I must now break off for want of time, even more than of eyesight, I have otherwise an unexhausted budget for you.

Do tell me when you write about the state of the farmers within your circle. A very intelligent land agent told me lately, that the country could in no way be so well served, as by Parliament's granting a large

sum to commissioners, to be lent on good security to land owners for improving their estates. My plan, as every body has a nostrum, is to allow all commons under two hundred acres to be divided, enclosed, &c. by substituting a cheaper process than our parliamentary one; — for instance, letting proofs be brought before the Quarter Sessions. I am afraid small commons will not bear the expense of an application to Parliament. Farewell, my dear Sir, and believe me, with kind regards to all your family circle,

Ever sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO DON AUGUSTIN ARGUELLES.

March 28, 1820.

Sir,

I need not assure you that the name of Arguelles has long been peculiarly dear to every lover of liberty, and in a particular degree to every friend of the Abolition of the slave trade; and if the debates which take place in our House of Commons had been preserved, they would testify with what grief and shame I myself lamented the cruel and unjust confinement under which you suffered. From time to time we inquired about you, still cherishing the hope that ere long you would, one way or other, be restored to liberty; and when the

late Spanish revolution was announced, your deliverance was anticipated as one of its earliest benefits to your country. But the newspapers now state that you are appointed the Minister of Grace and Justice; surely an appointment the most appropriate and auspicious for the most deeply injured of the human race.

I know not how far the rigours of your unjust confinement allowed you to become acquainted with the events that were passing in the world; but I am sure that if they did, you could not learn with indifference all the efforts that were making for delivering Africa from her European tormentors; and it might well infuse some drops of comfort into that bitter cup which was allotted to you, to be justly conscious that the disposition manifested by your country to join the other confederated powers in terminating the wrongs of Africa had probably been produced in no small degree by the force of your reasoning and the power of your eloquence. The period is at length arriving, when the beginning of this good work, made in Spain by abolishing the slave trade north of the line, was to be finally brought to its conclusion by an absolute and total Abolition. The 20th May next was named as the day on which Spain declared that her subjects should no longer be suffered to carry on a system which, under the name of commerce, includes in it whatever injustice and cruelty could perpetrate for the misery of its wretched victims. And can we entertain the slightest apprehension that a revolution, the very watchword of which is liberty, can endanger the fulfilment of a treaty, the object of which is to deliver the most miserable of all captives from the most galling

of all fetters? No, rather would your revolution have suggested the hope of deliverance to these poor sufferers, than that it would dash the cup of freedom, when for the first time about to be presented, from their lips. Let then the same eloquent voice which formerly pleaded the cause of these poor creatures be once more heard to pronounce the decree which shall declare their deliverance. It is by a singular ordination of Providence that it should be reserved for you, their advocate in the season of their misery and degradation, to pronounce the ordinance which is to declare their admission to the rank of human beings, and to recognise the right which as our fellow-creatures they possess to the common claims of justice and humanity.

You probably are scarcely aware that the horrible traffic in human flesh is now carrying on under the Spanish flag with circumstances of augmented cruelty. All the former horrors of the slave trade have been outdone in some recent instances. But this fresh aggravation of its evils was not wanted to convince your judgment or call forth your feelings. Yet it will prompt you to resume your former labours with increasing ardour, and to prosecute them with redoubled energy. I will detain you no longer than while congratulating you on your own deliverance, I congratulate also those who have so long been our common clients, that you are once more enabled to exert your well-known powers in their behalf. Lord Holland, who is accustomed to correspond with friends in Spain, has been so obliging as to promise me to forward to you this letter; and he assures me that you understand English perfectly, and that I may therefore

spare myself the effort I was about to make to have it translated into Spanish. I remain,

With great respect and regard,

Your faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

HON. WILLIAM LAMB [now LORD MELBOURNE] TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Whitehall, August 2, 1820.

My dear Sir,

I have this morning received your letter, and am very sorry indeed not to have had an opportunity of conversing with you before you left London, upon the present state of public affairs, although I am very much afraid no satisfactory conclusion could have been come to. I see the danger as clearly, and in as strong a light as you do, but I do not see any step that can be taken with a rational hope or prospect of averting it. I met Mr. Rumbold the member for Yarmouth, in the street yesterday, who like all other rational persons, or rather like all other persons, for I never witnessed so general an apprehension, is much alarmed, and he told me that he had seen you at Lord Carrington's, and that your idea was, that there should be county meetings, to petition the Crown and the Parliament to put a stop to the whole inquiry. However desirable such a course might have been at the beginning, it is impossible not to see that there are great difficulties attending upon it

in the present state of the affair, now that the Crown has already instituted and the House of Lords is pledged to prosecute the investigation. But the weightiest objection to such a measure appears to me the extreme uncertainty of the result of such meetings, and the doubt whether they would not tend to inflame and excite, rather than to tranquillise discontent and irritation. Supposing that in some few counties the influence of the gentlemen, &c. might be sufficient to procure the adoption of wise and temperate resolutions, there would be great danger in far the greater number that other counsels and other feelings would prevail. A spirit of opposition would be excited; the same misrepresentations would take place as in the case of your motion; it would be said to be all done in concert with, and in subservience to, the views of the Ministry; the Queen would be exhorted and encouraged to accede to nothing; the whole attempt would be unsuccessful, and leave nothing behind it but more violent heats and increased unpopularity to the authors of it. These are the considerations which press strongly upon my mind; but I am conscious that perhaps I am too despairing in matters of this nature, and lean too much to the side of doing nothing, and awaiting the course of events. If there were a fair opening of success, the object is so great, that it would be true cowardice not to hazard something for it. I should be most glad to hear from you upon the subject, and so much do I esteem your opinion, that I shall this night write to Lord Dacre, who is most deeply impressed with the peril of the crisis, to consult him upon the subject. One misfortune is, that if any thing of this sort were advisable, it should

have been set about long before. There is now hardly time enough left for effectual measures of this nature.

There is also a very great difficulty, which attends all such situations as that in which we are at present placed, and I cannot but suggest it for your consideration. I admit that there appears to me to be great danger of serious popular tumult and insurrection. I admit it to you, but I should be very loth to admit it generally, or to persons of whose judgment I had not a high opinion; because nothing aggravates danger of this kind so much as confessing fear; it encourages those from whom the danger proceeds, and may almost be said to produce the very evil it apprehends. Supposing then that this whole business were now to be concluded by the extraordinary means of an exertion of influence on the part of the property of the country, would it not create in the disaffected an exaggerated notion of the present peril, and of their own strength? Would they not say to themselves, the higher orders, &c. were sensible that this trial, if persevered in, would have brought about a revolution; they are aware of our strength, they fear it; and would not such reasoning bring about and hasten that struggle to which, it is impossible to conceal from one's self, every thing in this country appears to tend? That such appearances may be, as appearances in politics often are, delusive and fallacious, is my earnest hope and prayer, and I remain,

My dear Sir,

With great respect and esteem,

Yours very sincerely,

WILLIAM LAMB.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bledlowe, August 31, 1820.
Thursday evening.

My dear Wilberforce,

I never come here but to receive good; transient, perhaps, but good of the right kind! No wonder. It was through my dear S.'s kindness that my connection with Bledlowe commenced, and it has pleased God to make you and her the instruments of good to me in almost every thing in which you have had any influence on my concerns.

But I should have made a wider though less grateful remark. How much of what is good for us do we lose in London? How much is the heart made better by the country? You, and even I, perhaps, do more good for others in the former, but the latter is the place where I learn what is good for myself. I love the country; I love its natural innocent joys; I love its natural instructive sorrow too. Here my son and daughter are so conversant with the "short and simple annals of the poor" around them, that I am always led by them to individualise in the most impressive manner those abstract ideas of the sufferings of the lower orders which engage our speculations so much, and our real sympathies so little, in town.

But I am abstracting here myself, when I sat down simply to narrate.

The bell tolled two hours ago while we were dining. Who is it you have to bury? A poor old man, *Folly* by name, who died on Monday last. Oh, I recollect

the name. I used to laugh at his being simple enough to be persuaded to call his son Solomon. What is become of the boy Solomon Folly? &c. &c.

But my son returns. He has buried two bodies instead of one. And who is the other? Poor old Taylor from the workhouse; he died only this morning, but we have been obliged to bury him: the case was a mortification, and he was already offensive.

On further inquiries, I learnt that the deceased was a very honest, industrious old parishioner, who had with his wife lived creditably to the age of eighty, never calling on the parish for relief, till at last total inability to work had obliged them to do so (two or three years ago). Shocking to relate, they were compelled to quit their long-loved cottage, and go into the poor-house, to their deep but patient affliction.

I sally into the churchyard. I find Friday the clerk and sexton, and who was late master of the poor-house, covering in the grave of poor old Taylor; I hear a panegyric upon him that makes me wish to be so covered in his stead; sober, humble, industrious, kind to his old helpmate, always regular in his devotions, &c. all that man can see of the best symptoms.

But the poor widow of this morning is disconsolate, and is hurt at his being buried so soon. I have been at the poor-house to comfort her, and think I have succeeded. But oh, what a tale! "We have lived together, sir, since twenty-two; and our ages were so near the same, I know not which was oldest; he was in his eightieth year. Then the suffering! He has laboured under a mortification ever since Christmas last, and has

of late suffered terribly." Poor old woman! this which should have consoled her was rather her present chief topic of affliction! It is in heaven only that even our kindliest feelings will be rational. "Lo! these are they which have come out of great tribulation."

But where am I rambling? you do not want these suggestions, and yet, my dear Wilberforce, I have nobody that I think of writing to in such moods but you.

God bless you and yours, and may it not be among your trials to be bereft like poor old and nearly blind M. B. Taylor.

Yours ever, very affectionately,

J. STEPHEN.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Docketted—"True picture of his pious mind."]

Uxbridge, Sunday evening, September 24, 1820, eight o'clock.

"A faithful friend is the medicine of life; and they that fear the Lord shall find him."— Ecclesiasticus, vi. 16.

My dear Wilberforce,

Here I am on my way to town. My landlady at my request brought me a Bible. It was a folio, with the apocrypha. Why do we Protestants not make more use of those books, since the Church articles allow it? They certainly contain many most sublime passages; and if we had a right to judge from internal evidence what books were written by inspiration, or fell within

the apostles' definition, "all Scripture," &c., I know of none in the Old Testament, the Book of Psalms excepted, that I should be more disposed to place in the sacred canon than this Book of Ecclesiasticus. But the council of Laodicea, it seems, has stopped our right of judging by evidence internal or external. These, however, are the crude notions of a very unlearned man.

I have had one of my very pleasant Sundays — long solitary walking, fine weather, and the most exhilarating views of the goodness of the Creator in the beauties of the landscape around me, and then every thing falling out kindly and beyond expectation. It has been one of the days in which I cannot help thinking that the kind, tender, judicious spirit of your dear sister has been hovering over me, holding the reins of my fancy, and determining all, as far as was consistent with the freedom of my moral choice. Mistake me not; such thoughts do not diminish, they rather increase, my gratitude to her God and mine. He is not less the All-in-all, the gracious Source of every good, because He employs His ministering spirits in His works of benignity towards me.

I was obliged to be in town early to-morrow morning. I rejected the stages, because it was Sunday. They shall have no abetting of their vile profanations and their robbing the poor brutes of their Sabbath rest from me. The same objection applies more strongly to posting. Yet the night and early morning were tempestuous, and the rain continued till near ten. It was hard to frame a plan for being twice at church in my

way, and yet get hither before nightfall, even supposing the weather to grow and continue fair, of which there seemed no probability. Yet if I could have commanded weather and every thing else, the business could not have been managed more to my comfort and satisfaction. I was at Missenden church in the morning, as for good reasons I wished to be. I heard Mr. ——— at Chalfords St. Giles's, in the afternoon as I also wished, and had several little unconcerted, yet necessary accommodations to effect all this and make it as agreeable as possible, which it would be tedious to explain, the coincidence of which is really very striking and strange. But these things are by no means rare to me: they are almost invariable. I should fear to write in such a strain to almost any body but you. Yet why should it be thought presumptuous, why should it be thought degrading to the bounteous, all-pervading, all-directing Providence of Him who has declared that the hairs of our heads are all numbered, and that though not a sparrow falls to the ground without His care, we are of more value in His sight than many sparrows? Such views help us to trust in Him, help us to love Him, and what gives Him our hearts is not a trifle in His gracious, condescending, infinitely, inconceivably, condescending, regard.

I stop to buy a doll, a hopping frog, trumpery of any kind, for my little grandchildren; and why? Because, ridiculously trivial though the things are in themselves, they lead them to love grandpapa. But there is irreverence in every possible illustration of this subject, as well as infinite inadequacy. You will under-

stand me, and that is enough, and so good night; for I must to bed, meaning to be on the tramp again by five in the morning.

Yours, my dear and faithful friend,

"The medicine of my life," ever very affectionately,

J. S.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ.

'Bath, September 29, 1820.

My dear Stephen,

It quite vexes me not to be able to pour forth a little of the effusions which your last affectionate and to me delightful letter called forth (delightful, because I love Stephen, and it was Stephen all over, and as a picture should be, the likeness rather of his best). But company are actually up-stairs, come to dinner, and I am not dressed yet.— About your last letter, however, I have one word to say. I wish the idea of our Saviour had occurred to you: we are expressly told, "Giving thanks always, &c. &c. through Jesus Christ." I like to associate Christ with all my religious ideas, as the object of gratitude and love, and God, the supreme God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, also.

I must break off; but this is a practical remark, and I could not have been easy without making it. O, my dear friend, how thankful should we be for knowing

truths, compared with which all the world's wisdom is vanity and folly.

Poor Chancellor!

Poor Master in Chancery!

Poor great and rich men!

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO REV. HUGH PEARSON [now DEAN OF SALISBURY].

London, February 1, 1821.

My dear Sir,

I have not a little regretted the various hinderances which have from day to day prevented my sooner writing to you again, agreeably to the assurance contained in my last letter. Even now I cannot write to you as fully as I wish. Yet I am really anxious to state to you the considerations which influence my judgment in the question of restoring the Queen's name to the Liturgy; because my persuasion that this step is imperiously dictated by sound policy, so far from being owing in any degree to my feeling less reverence and attachment towards the throne than my countrymen in general, arises out of those very emotions, and from my deep conviction of the inestimable benefits which we owe to the monarchical branch of our constitution.

Unhappily, from various causes which are but too obvious, the bulk of the more religious and sober of the

middling and lower classes of this country have imbibed a persuasion, call it a prejudice, on this subject, which nothing will eradicate. To you I need not remark what pains are taken by the seditious abusers of the liberty of the press to poison and irritate the minds of the better disposed part of our community, and this affair of the Liturgy supplies them with a topic better suited to their purpose than any other that could be devised. They will not admit that the Queen is prayed for substantially though not by name, and they unjustly, I grant, impute her exclusion to the personal hatred of the King. And let her be ever so bad, they say, is she too bad to be prayed for? And then they bring up and place in the most invidious points of view, and invest with the blackest colouring, all the stories they have heard, or rather read, about the King himself when Prince of Wales, and object that he at least has no right to be called most religious, &c. Then it happens most sadly, that the best class of the community, the agricultural class, is suffering the most extreme depression, and I fear it is not likely to mend. And we know but too well that people in such a state of wretchedness are just prepared to become the dupes of the factious agitators, who know too well how to use their advantages. Again, consider that as the Queen is prayed for in all the Dissenting and Methodist chapels throughout the kingdom, there is a standing premium operating against the Church of England, and the people will have their present feelings maintained by the weekly repetition of the service.

I was very sorry to be unable to find a convenient

opportunity of speaking the other night, when, as you will see, I voted with Ministers. I should have liked to speak my mind a little plainly on some topics, more especially on that system of party which now reigns with such avowed predominance. It is that, in my mind, which has done more harm than any other cause to the character of Parliament. It so tinctures and distorts the view of the best men, and so biasses their judgments, as to make them act in ways which you would previously have thought impossible. What else could have made Lord Milton subscribe to the Queen's plate, and the Duke of Bedford to the subscription for Hone? What else can render our old nobility blind to the efforts that are using with such mischievous industry to pull down the throne, and with it the Church, and all that preserves the order and peace of society? But I must lay down my pen, only let me not forget to tell you that I should have wished the concession to be made by the King himself, and to be avowedly for the sake of his people, to prevent their being misled and seduced by artful and bad men, and thereby alienated from their King and country. My persuasion is, that his Majesty would fix in the minds of the well-disposed part of the population a deeper sense of his regard for the public welfare than by any other possible expedient. O how much are persons to be pitied who are placed in these high stations of dignity and danger! When young, every wish anticipated, every desire gratified; when older, every motive calumniated, every action perverted; and above all, they are in danger, from the multiplicity of their concerns, of ne-

glecting the one thing needful; and it is in truth the grand vice of the modern system of Christianity, that it does not enough represent Christianity in her true character, that of holding out the arms of invitation to persons of all ages and conditions, offering them the best blessings our nature can receive, pardon and peace, and love and joy, holiness and happiness. That you and I, my dear sir, may more and more largely partake of this blessed portion, is the cordial wish and prayer of,

Yours sincerely and affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A SON AT COLLEGE.

Kensington Gore, April 8, 1821.

My dear ——,

Never be shy in speaking to me on the subject of money. I trust, indeed, that there will be no subject on which you and I shall ever feel any shyness in our intercourse. Let me beg you always to deal unreservedly with me, even when you may be conscious you may have to state what it may be painful to me to know. You shall always find me disposed to behave to you in all respects like a real friend; and remember, you never can have a friend whose interests are more identical with your own, or whose credit is more implicated in yours. Young men, too often, are not enough aware of the evils which result from weakening confidence, which was beautifully, as well as justly, said

to be a plant of slow and difficult growth in an aged bosom.

On this topic of money it may become necessary for me, I fear, to speak to all my children. This returning so hastily to a metallic currency, a subject on which your master * has written with the pen of a political economist of no ordinary ability, has so suddenly increased the value of money, and brought down the prices of all raw produce, that our farmers are gradually falling into ruin, and I shall be very glad indeed if the lowering my rents 25 per cent. (and they were always ordered to be fixed on fair and moderate terms) will enable my tenants to pay me the remainder. Yet to a man who, like me, has never designedly saved any thing, such a diminution of income, a fourth, is not very convenient — but certainly we should all learn and practise economy. Economy is not inconsistent with generosity; on the contrary, unless people are as affluent as I myself was before my marriage, there can be no generosity without it: indeed, I ought not to have excepted myself then, for it was by being economical in every branch of my establishment, having but one house, one pair of horses, a less expensive table, less costly furniture, &c., than other people of my own fortune, that I was able to act with a generosity from which, I am sure, had mere self-gratification been my object, I should have been abundantly recompensed.

You would scarcely suppose, my dear ——, by the way in which I run on, that I am sadly stinted for

* The Bishop of Llandaff.

time this morning; such, however, is the fact: but when I begin writing to you, I find it very difficult to leave off; I must, however, very unwillingly change my correspondent, not lay down my pen. Farewell, my very dear ——, and believe me

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

MRS. H. MORE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Barley Wood, April 22, 1821.

My dear Friend,

Never, I beseech you, make an apology to me about not writing — I am always grieved when I am under a necessity of adding a feather to your load of cares. I never meant you should subscribe to Frome Church. I told them that your large and liberal charity purse did not suffice to the demands made upon it. Should any thing occur to you in the way of advice, it would be useful. This is the third church in this neighbourhood for which I have been called upon to give my pittance within a few months. Clifton promises very well.

How did your kind letter, received yesterday, cast down the high imaginations which your preceding one had raised! I had lived, and made others live, upon KING HENRY THE FIRST* ever since! We are natu-

* Christophe.

rally looking to you as the highly favoured among men, to be the grand agent of Providence to consummate the glorious work to which He has, in His mercy, been pleased to call you — that of being the instrument of giving that liberty, wherewith Christ has made them free, to the souls of our black brethren, which you have in a measure obtained for their bodies. And now, by an inscrutable Providence, your organ of pleading is taken away. God's ways are not as our ways — we must adore now, we shall understand hereafter. My poor unworthy prayers are constantly and fervently offered up for the restoration of your voice, and preservation of your life. — It is a dying world! Dear ——! What a saint has heaven gained! and what a mother have her six helpless babes lost! Lady —— wrote me a very affecting account of the whole. But I had not heard of ——'s domestic sorrows till I got your letter. I cannot guess how people who have no religion bear their afflictions and trials, when to the most pious and submissive they cost so dear!

The enclosed is to thank the artist for a present of our print. I have now five, each of which has some one characteristic merit. Slater is a pious as well as ingenious man.

My late neighbour, Whalley, who is living at Brussels, writes me that he is lodging in the same hotel with Cambasceres. They have much intercourse. He assures him that Buonaparte used to kick and cuff his marshals, and knock down poor Josephine. He says his angry passions were always at work — that he was never silent one minute.

Patty and I have not been out of doors for more than seven months. We are now only waiting for a western breeze to break prison.

A friend of mine was lately present at a Bible meeting in Ireland. — Of all the birds in the air, who do you think was in the chair? Old Edgeworth. The nobleman who was to have presided was taken ill: they were at a loss, and picked up this old sinner in the street, and told him he must go in and speak. "What must I say?" said he—"it is so utterly out of my way; I know nothing about the Bible; give me a few heads." They did, and he made an excellent speech, highly eulogising the sacred book, as that from which we first received our principles, and all that was good in us!! I am afraid we have other presidents not much better, though few, I believe, take such large strides towards atheism as this poor man! Yet they say it has helped the cause with the irreligious, for no one can say that Edgeworth is a fanatic. I would not write on thus, but that it requires no answer. Love to Mrs. W. and her dear children. I wish one of them would send me three lines to say how you are.

May God Almighty restore you!

H. More.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A DAUGHTER.

Kensington Gore, Sunday evening, June, 1821.

My dearest ——,

I trust I need not assure you that the letter which I received from you a few days ago gladdened my heart, and that not with a transient joy, but with solid and permanent satisfaction. It is now your business, my dear child, to endeavour to strengthen the foundation of all Christian graces, by learning more and more habitually to live and walk by faith and not by sight. Accustom yourself to be spiritually-minded, which, as the apostle truly says, is both life and peace. Frequent self-examination is one of the means which you will find eminently useful for this end. You would do well to practise it in the middle of the day as well as in the morning and evening. A very few moments will suffice for a general retrospect of the past morning. I have often kept written on a small slip of paper a note of my chief besetting sins, against which it was especially necessary that I should be habitually watching and guarding; of the chief Christian graces which I wished to cultivate; of the grand truths which I desired to bear in remembrance: and I used to look over this paper at my seasons of prayer or of self-examination. My chief duties and relations (such as father, brother, friend, acquaintance, master,) were down on this paper, and were thus kept in constant view. But in using this or any other expedient, you will, I am sure, remember ever to be looking up for that grace which can alone enable us to

will? or to do what is well pleasing to God. It is a very different thing to acknowledge this as a doctrinal tenet, and to live under the habitual impression of its truth, and to be carrying on, as it were, a continual intercourse with heaven by ejaculatory prayer.

I rejoice to think that my dear girl is striving to live under the practical influence of this blessed principle of spiritual-mindedness; and having been engaged in prayer for you, and knowing that to-morrow I should be extremely engrossed, and indeed not to-morrow merely, but for the whole week, I resolved to do that which you must observe I scarcely ever have done on this day, I mean, to write to my absent daughter. The truth is, that I have always been afraid, if I should make a practice of writing on a Sunday even to my children, lest they should adopt the same habit without so much necessity for it as I can plead from the little command I have of my own time; and there is nothing, you must have observed, of which I have always been more jealous than of any thing which might tend to impair the sanctity and spirituality of the Lord's day. I think that often good people have been led by the terms of the fourth commandment to lay more stress on the strictness of the Sunday than on its spirituality; on its being the day on which we are to make it our business, our set work, to cultivate our acquaintance with the invisible world, to cultivate our love both of God, of Christ, and of our fellow-creatures. Even in Isaiah's time, indeed, this spiritual improvement of this blessed interval from the cares and occupations of life was understood and enjoined. You must remember

that remarkable passage, "If thou make the Sabbath a delight," &c.; and it is observable, that the reward of obedience that is promised is, "Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord" (ch. lviii. towards the end), thus, as in other instances, intimating to us beyond dispute, by inference, that we may enjoy a particular grace or practise a particular duty, though heaven-derived, from being commanded to possess and abound in them. But I am called away, and for the present must say farewell. While I rejoice that my dear —— is employed so rationally, so usefully, in a manner also so pleasing to God, and so happily for herself, I cannot but look forward to the time of our again meeting and living a little quietly in the country, if it may please God, with some earnestness of desire. But it is right that we should abstain from all aërial castle building, and remember that not only the time is short, but even uncertain. We know not what a day may bring forth. Let us therefore be doing on the day the duties of the day, and then leave the future to that gracious Being who has declared Himself faithful to his promises. This world is not our rest; and it is best for us that our schemes for the future should often be disappointed, in order to teach us our true condition. For even with all the admonitions we are continually receiving of the uncertainty of all human things, we are but too apt to be forming for ourselves plans of future imaginary pleasure. I have been writing latterly, scarcely looking at my pen — but I hope I am legible. Farewell.

Ever affectionately,

W. Wilberforce.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO PRINCE CZARTORYSKI.

Marden Park, near Godstone, August 14, 1821.

Sir,

The present of a curious Bible with which your Highness lately honoured me manifests that I still live in your remembrance, and assuredly I retain a lively recollection of the friendly intercourse with which your Highness favoured me, when in England. Let me now return your Highness my best acknowledgments for so obliging a mark of your esteem; and let me at the same time avail myself of the opportunity afforded by Mr. Sienkiewick's return to his own country, for assuring your Highness of my best wishes for your health, usefulness, and happiness.

Remembering the interesting topics on which we conversed together, and the attention which your Highness paid to our various institutions for the improvement and benefit of mankind, I cannot but continue to feel a deep interest in your proceedings, and I only wish that your Highness had a field of operation and instrument to put in motion equal to your desires of benefiting your country and the human race.

By my last expression I am naturally reminded of those wretched beings who have been so long the objects of my concern. Your Highness, I am sure, will sympathise with me in the deep regret with which I inform you that, notwithstanding the solemn sentence of condemnation which was pronounced against the slave trade by the assembled powers of Europe at Vienna and Aix-la-Chapelle, it is still carried on, almost with-

out restraint. My own country, indeed, (blessed be God!) is now delivered from the criminality and shame of this guilty traffic. But it is still carried on by several of the powers which joined in the condemnation of it, more especially by France — the last power we should have hoped that would have been tempted to take up a commerce in human beings, which Great Britain had indignantly abandoned, as being defiled by wickedness and cruelty. When men disclaim the laws of God and the dictates of justice and humanity, it is only by a sense of shame that they can be made to do their duty. And we may hope that if all virtuous and honourable men in the higher circles would bear their testimony against a system productive of so much misery and barbarism, the government of France would be ashamed of sacrificing the credit of their country for the sake of a little, and, as our experience shows, a doubtful commercial benefit.

Let me then engage you, Prince, to be my confederate in this holy warfare. It is a service in which I am persuaded you will never regret to have engaged; and you may probably live to see your zealous benevolence rewarded by the growing civilisation of Africa, rescued from the tormentors who are still prolonging her darkness and barbarism.

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE DUCHESS DE BROGLIE.

Marden Park, August 23, 1821.

Madame,

General Macaulay lately visited me in my country retreat, and gave me much curious, and, I am sorry to say, much painful intelligence. It was to me not the least interesting particular of it to hear that the Duchess de Broglie had mentioned me with kindness, and the intelligence confirmed an intention I had before formed, of addressing a few lines to her. You, I doubt not, will sympathise in the feelings which are excited in me, when I proceed to execute this duty — feelings of a tender, and, though not absolutely a painful, yet a melancholy kind.

It seldom happens that any one, on looking back for several years, can forbear to have a sigh, if not a tear, called forth by the retrospect. Such is indeed the case in this country, where, however, our insular situation has so exempted us from the stupendous reverses which France has exhibited, that the monotonous uniformity of our life may appear scarcely to furnish incidents to affect the heart; yet, in our motley world, the events of private life will, in any country, abundantly suffice for the purpose, and I should be void of all feeling, if my sensibility were not powerfully called forth in addressing the Duchess de Broglie. I rejoice to hear that you continue to direct your endeavours to the improvement and happiness of your fellow-creatures, and that

the Duc de Broglie has manifested, that the poor unoffending victims of avarice, who are the objects of my special care, have not failed to attract the notice of a nobleman who is so justly respected and esteemed. I rejoice to find that he recognises the claim, which weakness and misery have on the pity and the exertions of superior rank, talents, and virtue — that very weakness and misery, in which the low-minded and the mercenary, sometimes cunning, but never wise, see only the prey to satiate their base rapacity.

After the honourable earnestness with which your country united with all the other great powers of Europe at the congress of Vienna, and afterwards at Aix-la-Chapelle, in pronouncing sentence of condemnation on the slave trade as a system of wickedness and cruelty, the greatest that had ever affronted the justice and excited the commiseration of mankind, it cannot but be to the hopes of every good and humane mind most deeply disappointing, to see the government of France so far forgetful of its own duty and of the respect it owes to the character of the nation whose affairs it administers as to be tempted by a petty, and on the whole a very uncertain, profit, to return with avidity to this base traffic in the human species. The statesmen who can think of founding the social edifice of such a country as France on such a mean foundation, have indeed profited little from the moral lessons which have been afforded to mankind within the last twenty years.

I shall think it an honour, as well as a pleasure, to supply M. de Broglie with any intelligence he may

desire; or, indeed, to execute any commission either for him or for yourself in this country.

Excuse this tresspass on your time, and believe me,

With cordial respect and attachment,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

London, March 19, 1822.

My dear Friend,

I have been for above two months carrying about with me in my pocket-book the enclosed half note, not thinking it quite right without necessity to put it into any hands but your own; and hoping that, as I trust is now the case, the period would arrive when I might execute that intention. It is a contribution which I feel it an honour to make, as one of the fruits of our long and uninterrupted friendship; and I hope a better motive than vanity confirms the gratifying recollection, that I first was the honoured instrument of leading you to set on foot your admirable plans for the benefit of your poor cottagers, by making you acquainted with the dark and desolate condition in which they then lay sunk. There is no part of your life on which I reflect with more pleasure than on the payment of your debt to the Barbarians, after settling your account so honourably with the Greeks,—the polished inhabitants of the London squares. It has pressed of late years, I fear, too

hard on your pocket; but it has been a blessed work, and I cannot but hope that it will prove a model which others will hereafter imitate.

My dear friend, may the Almighty continue to grant you the divine support to sustain you under all your sufferings. It is an unspeakable satisfaction to reflect that they are all measured out by unerring wisdom and unfailing love, that therefore they are neither needless or superfluous; neither will they be fruitless. You will, I doubt not, rejoice hereafter in having gone through them, however trying to the flesh. That blessed sentence of the Apostle's, "I reckon that the light afflictions of this life, which," comparatively speaking, "are but for a moment, will work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." May your crown be rich as it will be incorruptible, and undefiled, and unfading! And it is the best consolation your sympathising friends can have... whether they manifest their affection by waiting at your bedside, or by the solicitude with which they receive the communications about you from those attendants in whose services they would themselves gladly share... that they may justly cherish the persuasion, that not a paroxysm of pain or a season of languor do you now experience which will not be abundantly overpaid in that blessed world where sickness as well as sorrow shall have fled away. Farewell, farewell, my dear friend, may God, through Christ, and by His Holy Spirit, be your present support, and your everlasting portion!

Ever your sincere and affectionate friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

RT. HON. G. CANNING TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Gloucester Lodge, May 1, half past eleven.

My dear Wilberforce,*

"My eyes just open on your" note. But though awake, I am not in a condition to get out of bed yet, for my cold and hoarseness have returned upon me, and I must turn round (after having finished this note) and try to sleep them off.

I can therefore better sympathise with you than you imagined. But I am very glad to know the cause (though very sorry for its existence) of your going away last night, because it will enable me to set many people right. I did not happen to fall in with Heber last night, and Money could not give me any tidings of you. Happily we had a majority of five — quite enough for the first stage in so "new and strange" a question; and there will be plenty of opportunities — one at least there will certainly be, on the second reading, for your "potent word."

I will endeavour to consult your convenience in fixing the day.

Shall I add your name to the Committee for preparing the Bill? I will, unless you forbid me before four o'clock. But now I must address myself to sleep again, for another hour or two, and so good by. Pray do not work yourself to death.

Ever sincerely and affectionately yours,

GEORGE CANNING.

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. v. p. 127.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A SON.

Ampton, Sunday, September 29, 1822.

My dearest ——,

The event itself had been stated to us by Lord Calthorpe on our arrival yesterday evening, but without any other particulars. I have but very little time at my command to-day, compared with what I could gladly employ, and therefore I can use my pen even less than my weak eyes would allow me. But I must send back a few lines in return for your kind and affecting letter; and though, as you remark, you might be sure I should specially remember you all in my prayers this day, yet it is a pleasure to myself to assure you that I have been pouring them forth for you, and imploring that this striking visitation may produce on you the blessed effects, which I doubt not divine goodness designs that it should operate. We ought always on such occasions to be jealous of ourselves, bearing in mind the deceitfulness of our own hearts, and the consequent danger of our deriving no permanent benefit from emotions of which we at first conceive the effects will last for ever. Let us endeavour then to render the effect permanent, by some practical change. For instance; it would be an excellent one to commence, if you think there is any room for it, an improvement in the management of your private devotions. No one can here judge for another, because the right conduct may depend on bodily temperament, or on domestic circumstances; but if we have seen reason to believe that our private prayers have been at all hurried or discomposed, or their warmth or

fervour damped by their being put off to too late an hour at night, or by our not having time enough in the morning, let us correct the defect at such a season, with earnest prayers for a blessing on it from Heaven. O, my dear ——, all I have to say may be expressed in three words — be in earnest. I cannot but hope that a gracious God is guiding you, and He appears hitherto to have been drawing you by the cords of love. O may you yield to this soft compulsion! Compel not your heavenly Father (if I may humbly presume to use such an expression), compel Him not to use a harsher discipline. I think you must be sensible that your natural temper or habits dispose you to relish solitude less than is commonly desirable; but above all things, see to it that your private devotions are not stinted or damped. I wish you would read over, (why not with ——?) Bickersteth's excellent treatise on prayer. Even at my age, I thought I received advantage from it — especially some of the parts in which he treats of the danger and evils of distraction in prayer, and of the best methods of guarding against them.

I have naturally been led into saying what I thought might be most useful to you, but you will anticipate, I doubt not, many of the reflections which this affecting incident enforces on my mind. I am suddenly told that I must immediately make up my letter, which I had understood was not to go till night. I can only therefore say once more, may God pour out His best blessings on you and yours; may He support poor ——— under this most heavy, and, except for the general uncertainty of life, most unexpected

blow. For who that witnessed the extraordinary exertions which our departed friend was capable of making, and apparently without injury, could have supposed he would so soon break down. Never could it be more truly affirmed of any man than of him, that he died in the service — and in the service of a better Master than any which the world contains. How little could it have been expected, that of him and myself I should be the survivor! But I must break off. Once more then, farewell! May our heavenly Father bless you all.

I am,

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Docketted: "Dear Stephen on anniversary of my dear sister's death.— Most affectionate and pious. — A true picture of his mind."]

Missenden, October 18, 1822.

My dear Wilberforce,

Where time is inexhaustible, they have probably no measure for its course; and were it otherwise, the inhabitants of heaven would hardly mark their eras by the revolutions of our little globe. If they did, this would perhaps be a festive day with them, as the birthday of an illustrious spirit; for there are gradations of rank in heaven. One star differeth from another star in glory — and if love, humility, piety and patience, are paths to the peerage there, my dear ——'s patent was

secure. Dignities on earth would have ill suited her taste; but superior rank in heaven, where there is no envy and no pride, will attract only superior love, attest superior excellence, and confer superior joy.

I should be a selfish creature, indeed, to remember the event, six years old, of to-day with a discontented or repining spirit. The common sentiment, "I would not call her back if I could," is far too cold for me. I would give one of my limbs, ay, my life itself if necessary, to rescue her from the miserable change. But you are no stranger to my feelings on this subject; you also partake of them. Yet so invincible are the prejudices arising from custom, or so embarrassing the consciousness of singularity, that even with you it is much easier for me to write, than to speak or act my true feelings on the recollection of my dear ——'s flight,

"An upward flight, if ever soul ascended;"

and experience has proved to me, that the day of commemorating her, whether the anniversary of her blessed change, or of her birth, or of our marriage, is most pleasantly and decorously, and satisfactorily, spent in solitude. To-day I have the comfort of spending it in our woods and commons, and in a day as bright as midsummer. I grow daily more and more in love with this place. O what a delicious oratory is a beech wood in a calm hot day! Not a leaf stirring; not a sound; a sacred kind of shady light, with here and there a straggling sunbeam, like the gleam of providential direction in the dark concerns of life. I do not doubt that the druidical influence arose from the wor-

ship in woods. It must have been irresistibly imposing; it is plain, too, that the Gothic cathedral is an imitation of these solemn natural aisles. I really pity you at Marden Park: though fine enough in its way, it is not in the right way; besides, there you stand alone: all the ornaments are made for your single self; and then, they are *made*. And you have clumps on barren hills, instead of luxuriant hill tops and sides, and riant valleys, and sweet upland though smooth and level commons; and lovely cottages of the true peasant breed, and a village and church, and endless varieties of walks, &c. But do not suppose that I boast of these things merely to tantalise you. I live in hopes that you will now and then, ay, and not rarely, partake of them; for I know that they would be quite to your taste. In that view, I have the better reconciled my conscience to some enlargement of Healthy Hill cottage beyond my original plan, though the making room for my grandchildren was also an object.

I have so contrived my little cottage, with no small credit to my architectural talents, that it will hold not only you but your tail. Mind, however, I do not mean your political tail, nor your religious tail, nor even your African tail, either of which is twice as long as M'Gregor's; none of your hangers on, but your domestic tail merely. To entice you I have provided all the conveniences I think that you want, and among them a veranda across the front of the house, like your own at Kensington Gore, where you may have a walk of thirty-five feet, warm even at Christmas, for it has a south-west aspect, and is shut up by the body of the

house and projecting wings from the wind, in every other quarter; in this respect it is superior to that of Kensington Gore, the ends of which were uncovered. And then, the riant beautiful prospect before it! The air!—Here emphatic silence must assist me, till you behold and breathe it.

Now whether all this will attract you, I don't know; but if it will not, let me know, for there is a weighty question at present between my gardener here and me, which you may help me to decide, viz. whether I shall have a gravel walk or only a turf one, of 400 feet length or more in front of my paddock. The gravel is far off, and therefore will be costly; but then it would suit you best in moist weather, and I would defy the whole kingdom to produce a terrace with prospects equally various and beautiful.

You see, my dear W., I am not only building houses, but castles; and building them too in a land my dear —— has forsaken. Yet can I truly say, that these things do not make me forget Stoke Newington churchyard, nor rival in my heart the prospects beyond it. I am rather jealous of being thought by strangers an old dotard, that is planning for his long continuance in a world from which he is likely to be soon called.

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(Then (adds Mr. W.) he beautifully declares how much better is the portion he looks for, &c. &c. There were then private matters in another sheet, which he desired me to burn.)

RT. HON. G. CANNING TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Gloucester Lodge, October 24, 1822.

My dear Wilberforce *,

I now send you the Portuguese note—I should rather say the note to the Governor of Portugal—upon the Brazilian slave trade, which, after the declaration of independence by Brazil, Portugal has no right to carry on.

I expect every day an application from Brazil for the acknowledgment of that independence. Shall we be justified in making the Abolition of the slave trade by Brazil a *sine quâ non* condition of any such acknowledgment? I incline to think so. But there are immense British interests engaged in the trade with Brazil, and we must proceed with caution and good heed; and take the commercial as well as moral feelings of the country with us. I say enough, however, to show you the leaning, — the strong bias of my opinion.

I have no objection to your communicating with those whom you mention, verbally, when you come to town. I confess I would rather that you did not correspond upon the matter at present, particularly as all my colleagues are away, and know less than you do. There is no hurry, as what remains to be done on different points must be done by us; and with Spain, or Brazil, or France alone, rather than at Verona.

Ever, my dear Wilberforce,

Most sincerely yours,

GEO. CANNING.

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. v. p. 137.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A DAUGHTER.

Elmdon House, near Coventry, December 5, 1822.

My dear ——,

Though, from the questions I have heard buzzing around me for a few days of "Was not the 6th little W——'s birth day?" I suspect you would not remain without a congratulation on the anniversary of that event, which, through God's blessing, raised me to the dignified station of a grandfather, were I to be silent; yet I cannot feel comfortable without assuring you of the thankfulness with which I look backward on being reminded by the recurrence of this day of such an addition to my domestic comforts, and look forward to the gradual developement of the bodily and mental faculties of this dear grandchild. The future is indeed uncertain as to the particular events which may take place, but not uncertain, blessed be God, as to their nature and colour, if we take due pains to improve the means of grace which the divine goodness has afforded us; for we are assured that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. It may happen that this dear boy may hereafter in the senate watch over the matured growth of some institutions of which a certain grandfather, long ago laid in the grave, had superintended the tender and infant shoots; planting also in his turn some young saplings which his grandchild may hereafter behold in their full beauty of foliage and exuberance of fruit; or possibly, what I should much rather covet, he may hereafter enforce from the pulpit those blessed truths which both his paternal and

maternal grandfather had inculcated in their day; and oh may it be added! which his own father and mother had so happily exemplified. You may remember that in China the stream of honour flows in the opposite direction to that which it takes in our European countries — I mean men ennoble backwards. They reflect their honour on their progenitors. Both modes have in them something of truth and nature; and while to be the child of a distinguished parent cannot but be a credit to any one, so, to be the parent of a distinguished child, every father's and much more every mother's feelings will pronounce to be at once an honour and a delight; one of the greatest, as it is surely one of the purest, delights that our nature can enjoy in this world of sin and sorrow. This fund of pleasure, you must remember, is eminently in your keeping, and oh may God grant that it may have a gradual and an abundant increase! But I forget that I have letters to write today of a far less grateful kind, to correspondents with whom I have far less disposition to communicate; I must therefore say farewell. Give the dear little fellow an additional kiss in the name of his old grandfather, and believe me——, with constant prayers for your best interests, your truly affectionate

W. Wilberforce.

BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

December 9, 1822.

Dear Sir,

I thank you for your very kind letter, and your concern for my health and my eyes, as well as for the enclosure of half a ten-pound note for our college, which is valuable on many accounts, not only for its own substantial worth, but for the influence of your name and example.

We have, indeed (thank God), had every encouragement for the continuance of our endeavours towards an establishment for the education of young men intended for holy orders. When I have the pleasure of acknowledging the receipt of the second half of the ten-pound note, I will send you the list of our latest contributions.

The enclosed pages are part of an introduction to some Selections from Epictetus, intended for the use of our future students. This part of the introduction was occasioned by a passage in Sir Thomas Bernard's "Comforts of Old Age," which contains so great a misrepresentation of the stoic philosophy as made it incumbent on me (I conceived), as an editor of Selections from Epictetus, to notice it. I shall be very glad if my defence should meet with your approbation.

I am, dear sir,

With great respect and regard,

Yours very sincerely,

T. St. David's.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO SIR T. D. ACLAND, BART.

The Temple, near Leicester, December 13, 1822.

My dear Sir T.,

Had not the complaint in my eyes been a continual hindrance to my writing, my want of leisure would not have prevented my long ago inquiring how you were going on. But the sentiments I had to pen to you could not properly be communicated through the medium of an amanuensis, my common resource. I therefore have remained silent. But you have often been in my mind, the more so in consequence of some desponding words which dropped from you one day towards the end of the session. I should have been very unfeeling if they had not affected me, and deeply too. And let me avail myself of my privilege, as having now passed my grand climacteric, to pour forth to you with freedom, I can truly call it friendly freedom, some of the reflections which you called forth.

Alas! my dear Sir Thomas, I can well understand the feelings of a warm-hearted man, who entering into life sanguine and ardent, full of right aims and benevolent tendencies, compares some years after what he has actually effected with the hopes he had once indulged. And I can but too well conceive how natural it is for him in such circumstances to be ready to give up in despair all his previous projects, and to sit down in despondency, or retire to the frivolities of taste and fancy, till conscience rouses him into renewed efficiency. But besides that in such a humour a man greatly undervalues the worth

of his actual performances, and you for instance the value of an independent course in the House of Commons of the member, *qualis sis*, of one of the first counties in England, we are all apt to forget that, after all, my dear friend, our chief business is at home. I need not apologise to you for speaking seriously — it would be worse than affectation — therefore (to pursue the train of thought I was entering on), though it is doubtless our duty, in the highest sense, to improve to the utmost of our power the opportunities of doing good to others, which a gracious Providence has granted to us, yet our grand object, our ultimate end, should be to form in ourselves that character which is to fit us for a higher state of existence in a better world (I need not surely guard against being supposed to mean, that we are not all along to bear in mind that all our efficiency and success in this great work are to be derived from higher influences). Now this, blessed be God, is a cultivation which in one part of it or another may be carrying on continually, and will not depend on the result of our plans of usefulness to others. For instance, that very sickening feel, if I may so term it, with which you may be now disposed to contemplate your parliamentary efforts, may itself be moderating expectations that were too sanguine, may be loosening the hold which this world had upon you, and teaching you habitually to be looking above and beyond it, and may be enforcing on you the useful lesson not to expect much justice from man, but to accustom yourself to live under the constant sense of the divine presence, and with the continual desire of the divine favour. You, however, are still a

young man, and only strengthen, or rather temper and put in order the various parts of your intellectual and moral machinery, and lay in also a copious assortment of raw materials of all sorts, and I doubt not but that, humanly speaking (I mean reasoning, according to the ordinary probabilities of life), you, D. V., will live to work them up into many fabrics useful and esteemed amongst men. Meanwhile, do on the day the duties of the day, and consider how very few there are in this whole world, or what is more, ever have been, who have so much to be thankful for as yourself. That there are so many who value and love you I doubt not you account among the greatest subjects for gratitude. You see I am slyly preparing an additional motive for your receiving kindly the letter with which I am now troubling you, for I can assure you it is the unambiguous fruit of esteem and affection. That a gracious Providence may continue to shower on you its choicest blessings, rendering you a blessing to others, and honoured and happy in yourself, is the cordial wish, and shall I not add prayer? of him who (begging his kind remembrances to Lady Acland and any others he knows within the circle, Barker for instance, or Marriott,) subscribes himself, my dear Sir Thomas,

Your sincere old friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

If you write to me, my best direction is always London.

I have neither time nor eyesight to read over what I have scribbled, if there are mistakes, *parce precor.*

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ADAM HODGSON, ESQ.

32, St. James's Place, February 27, 1823.

My dear Sir,

I should sooner have had the pleasure of writing to you, partly for the purpose of availing myself of a kind offer you formerly made me, of guaranteeing the safe conveyance of any letter to the United States, but for my understanding from our common friend, Mr. Macaulay, that you were likely to be in London ere this time. As you do not mention this intention in the obliging communication which I have this day received from you, your journey to town may probably be delayed, and therefore I will lose no time. Indeed I am impatient to thank you for the present of your letter to Mr. Say, and to assure you, without a compliment, that I think it a publication, which so far from requiring any such palliating plea as your modesty disposes you to allege, might well do honour to any one. I will add what will give you still more pleasure, the sincere assurance that I think it likely to be productive of great benefit. The prejudices must be strong indeed, which are not considerably weakened, if not absolutely removed, by such a concentration of undoubted facts, and by such just reasonings.

I am about to send into the world a small publication, which I hope, by the blessing of God, may do some good; indeed it required that persuasion to induce me to come forward, feeling as I do a repugnance to entering upon a new field of warfare, which I presume must arise chiefly from my advanced period of life, for it is quite different

from the sensations I used to experience in my younger years. However, it appeared a positive duty, in the opinion of my best and ablest friends, and therefore I had no objection. My object will be to impress on all religious and good men throughout the empire, that the West Indian slave system, if I am right in my facts, ought as soon as possible to be abolished; but at least that the subject ought to be duly investigated for the purpose of ascertaining, beyond dispute, the real state of facts, that we may adopt the right line of conduct. Allow me to beg you to present my best respects to Mr. Cropper, and to Mr. Roscoe when you see him,

And believe me, with cordial esteem and regard,
My dear Sir, very sincerely yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I return Mr. Wilson's letter, and will certainly take an opportunity of stating that I have reason to believe my former condemnation was too strong. I wish Mr. W. had enabled me to contradict it more effectually. Could you obtain for me a precise statement of what were the provisions of the Act in question, and what the plea which at all justifies them? I apprehend it is perfectly easy to smuggle slaves into the States on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, whence, in any number, they might be introduced into Missouri; besides that all accounts concur in mentioning a constant stream of slaves setting in from the eastern coast to the interior.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE REV. HENRY VENN.

St. James's Place, Tuesday evening,
March 12, 1823.

My dear friend,

It strikes me, on reflection, that Doddridge's Eight Sermons on Regeneration, and Witherspoon's Essay on Regeneration, would be better for the friend we conferred about than any other publication that occurs to me. He seems to want a deeper sense of a work to be wrought on the human heart by the power of God, and to be wrought by Him alone, as the apostle ascribes that ardent desire of going to heaven, which is one of the effects of the indwelling Spirit, to the power and workmanship of God—"now He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God:" and by the way, consult Pole's Synopsis for a note on wrought, *κατεργασομενος*, *expolivit*.

Were he to have a just sense of the greatness of the change to be effected, and if he would study and consider the fair import of those passages, which speak of the union between Christ and believers, in St. John, vi. xv. (the vine), &c. and the xviith, the three or four verses following, "neither pray I for these alone," &c.; and if he would then compare these passages with St. Paul's prayers for his Christian disciples, in Eph. first and third chapters, and in Philipp. I. and Coloss. I., he would become sensible how much more there is than he has hitherto conceived in being a true Christian —and this leading him to detect the scantiness of his own attainments, and discovering to him the earnest-

ness with which he has been applying his faculties to earthly interests and objects, and how little he has been duly endeavouring to obtain those large communications of the Holy Spirit, which, professing to believe the Scripture, he must admit that he might have obtained (for He is faithful that hath promised); all this, accompanied with earnest prayer, would lead to that deep remorse, that brokenness of heart, which would make him welcome the Saviour as his deliverer from the power no less than from the punishment of sin, and look to Him for wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. Let him consider the addresses to the seven churches, and see how our Lord enforces on them the right affections of the heart — I have always found people more easily brought to see their sinful ingratitude to God and the Redeemer than any other fault — and then let our friend consider how (Rom. i.) God is represented as giving the Gentiles up to their own lusts, because they were not thankful for the comparatively trifling blessings they knew of.

May God bless you, my dear Sir, and your Christian efforts.

Get our friend to prayer, and all will be well. I understand that charming daughter, who lives with him, is truly pious. Let her pray for him too, and I am sanguine in hopes all will be well. I should like him to read the account of Dr. Bateman's conversion.

Farewell, and believe me ever,

With every good wish, my dear Sir,

Your sincere and affectionate friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

RT. HON. G. CANNING TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Gloucester Lodge, January 4, 1824.

My dear Wilberforce,

I have communicated your letter of Friday to Lord Liverpool and to Robinson.

They are strongly of opinion that the setting apart a specific sum for the purpose of eventual compensation to the West Indians, and that sum one obviously inadequate (as it must be) to any thing like the amount of compensation, if any shall be found due, would have only the effect of committing parliament to the principle, without defining either the case in which it would be applicable, or the extent to which it would be to be applied.

The West Indians in their resolutions of last year recorded their admission that no promise had been made to them of compensation, though undoubtedly it had been thrown out in debate that if a case of positive pecuniary injury could be made out, the suffering ought to be borne by the community at large, not by any class of it. This, however, is a very different thing from buying ameliorations, and might be, and probably would be, executable in a different way from that of direct payment of money to individual planters.

If a shop for such payments is once opened, there will be no want of customers; for what West Indian now would not part with his estate at half or one fourth of its value?

Barham, you know, wanted us to buy all the West Indies.

Ever, my dear Wilberforce,

Very sincerely yours,

GEO. CANNING.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ONE OF HIS SONS AT COLLEGE.

My very dear ——,

I trust I scarcely need assure you that you are much and often in the thoughts of all of us — indeed, it would indicate a want of common affection if the very circumstances of your present situation and the cause of your banishment were not to be continually bringing your image before us with emotions and associations of more than common tenderness, and so they do, my very dear boy, making you in idea, if not in person, a party to our daily rambles. I think I feel about you especially on a Sunday, when my mind always runs out more particularly on my dear children, and when you must yourself feel in a peculiar degree the want of domestic soothing. Yet I own I hope that on a Sunday you will endeavour to avoid company, and guard with the greatest care against whatever might tend to draw the mind and feelings downwards, and to clog them, if I may use Milton's language,

"With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould."

I must say that, on the ground of my own expe-

rience, I believe there is a special blessing vouchsafed to the keeping of that day devoted to spiritual purposes, including, of course, in them such methods of employing the mind and affections as may cultivate a spirit of love, compassion, beneficence, &c. towards our fellow-creatures. Some of the happiest days of my life have been spent at inns where I have halted for the Sunday wherever I found myself on the Saturday night. I never shall forget one Sunday, in particular, when Babington and I were fellow-travellers in a tour through Wales. He speaks of it as well as myself with feelings of lively gratitude and tenderness. There cannot be a more proper season than the Sunday for endeavouring to cultivate a spirit of Christian peace and joy in believing. I have found it useful to keep by me on paper short memoranda of the chief mercies and blessings of my life, and likewise of the chief causes for humiliation and self-reproach. I am sure I need not suggest to you how the consideration of each serves to enhance and quicken the other. In truth, no one had ever perhaps so much (none more) cause as myself to adopt the Psalmist's declaration, a little altered, that "goodness and mercy have followed me all my days." And when I say this, I cannot but be forcibly impressed with the consciousness that one of my chief mercies has been the having such affectionate children.

A visit has been suggested to us which would bring us within an afternoon's ride of Oxford. In that case I trust you would spend a Sunday with us. I quite desiderate you, and shall still more when I arrive at home, than now when we are visiting different friends. We

have been highly gratified by finding religion establishing itself more and more widely. I am sorry you cannot be here. I have just been over a lunatic asylum with above one hundred patients, a most striking scene. There was nothing to shock, no hurry, no apparent anxiety. I went round with the surgeon superintendent, and there was no unpleasant emotion in the face of a single individual on his accosting them. Farewell, my very dear ——. May every blessing be your portion through time and in eternity!

Yours ever,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Master's Office, March 24, 1824.

My dear Wilberforce,

I cannot see you on Saturday, having been, unavoidably almost, drawn in to engage to meet Dr. Gaskin at Stoke Newington. I went there on Tuesday to visit the remains of my beloved and very excellent mother on the fiftieth anniversary of her birth-day into heaven; and was childish enough to scatter flowers on the tomb by way of jubilee, as I was to be followed in the visit by some others of her descendants that day. In some points I am more than half a Roman Catholic; and perhaps Dr. G. will think me a whole one. But really the recollection of my dear mother's saint-like and triumphant end, and the wonderful manner in

which Providence has during fifty years answered her prayers for her children, has much by which even a Protestant may be edified. I revived the scenes half a century gone by with all the vivid freshness of yesterday's events: the sun was remarkably brilliant, as on that memorable morning, and reminded me forcibly of a feeling I have repeatedly had in such cases, viz. a sadness from his cheering beams. Well wrote Addison "The daylight and the sun grow painful to me;" but it gave the reverse of sadness now, and I returned to my tread-mill with gayer spirits from my Stoke Newington walk. It was odd that I met there, in the morning, much against my purpose, three who knew me, comprising two, the only friends out of the family now living, that knew my dear mother. I called to leave a card at the old Doctor's door, having seen him last in great affliction for the loss of his wife, and thinking it right to ask for his health; but I was in a manner forced to go in, and there found those friends with him, to their great surprise and mine.

When I called on the sexton, a female one, to assist me in what I wished at the tomb, I found that my name would not do to direct her to it; and when I described it she said, "O, sir, that tomb is Mr. Wilberforce's." I afterwards found the Doctor apparently of the same opinion; at least he was surprised when I brought to his recollection that a mother of my own had, fifty years ago, been laid in that spot, and given me the desire, as well as the customary right, to purchase and appropriate the ground I had since sunk a vault in.

I am neither mortified nor ill-pleased that you, my

dear W., should cast me, living and dead, into the shade; and am quite content it should be said hereafter, not that you were laid in my vault, but I in yours, provided it does not happen from your going first.

With love to Mrs. W.

Ever very affectionately yours,

J. S.

J. S. HARFORD, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bangor, October 18, 1824.

My dear Friend,

At Milford, as we were on the point of embarking for Ireland, I was greeted by your most interesting and welcome letter.* The animation which it breathed, and the firmness of the writing, confirmed the delightful assurance which it gave me, that you were restored to your ordinary standard of health; and oh! may it please God to vouchsafe you a long freedom from the painful attacks which have lately caused your friends so much anxiety. You were most kind in not deeming my suggestions about the expediency of allowing yourself a few years of comparative respite from public life troublesome. I well know that your vigorous mind reasons on the principle of

"Nil actum reputans dum quid superesset agendum."

But two such severe illnesses as you have endured within a few months painfully demonstrate that the

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. v. p. 229.

body is not equal to the demands of the mind, but calls for relaxation from over-anxiety, and oppressive care. One thing, at least, I trust you will be prevailed upon to determine, and that is very much to narrow the sphere of your labours, and not allow worthy but inconsiderate men to force too much work upon you.

We paid a most interesting visit at Belle-vue. Twelve years had elapsed since our former visit; but so deep was the impression made both on Louisa and me by the kindness we then experienced, that we flew to meet every member of the family as old friends, and as united to us by the bond of Christian affection; and we met, on their side, with corresponding feelings. Dear amiable Mr. Latouche bends beneath the weight of ninety-one years; but, considering his great age, he is a wonderful man, being in full possession of his faculties, and replete with attention to all around him. There is in his demeanour a benignity, a meekness, and a courtesy which attract to him in return inexpressible tenderness and respect. He was generally the first at prayers in the chapel every morning. Of the chapel at Belle-vue you have doubtless heard. It is connected with the house by a long glazed walk planted on each side with exotics and flowering plants. It is built on a very elegant design, and is well adapted to its object. The girls of Mrs. Latouche's school, which is in the park, attend the chapel regularly, and open the service by singing a psalm or hymn; and being carefully instructed for this purpose, their singing is truly beautiful, and imparts a peculiar interest to the family devotion. Mrs. Latouche is the very image of benevolence—she is ready at all

times to make any sacrifice of time or attention for the good of her fellow-creatures. Her exertions in this way are unwearied. The poor in the neighbourhood have had reason to bless Belle-vue and its inmates for the last twenty years. But Mrs. L. is not merely kind and charitable, she is so with discrimination: every thing is done in a large and liberal way; but the spirit of order and system animates the whole machinery of her household. Mr. Latouche gives employment, in the house and out of it, to upwards of eighty persons.

Miss ——, their niece, and, I might add, their adopted daughter, is a very interesting person, and a great blessing to them: when I was last here she was a little girl. Great pains have been taken with her education, and the result has been most successful. Religion has taken deep root in her heart, and she is highly accomplished.

I spent many delightful hours in Mr. Knox's room. His mind is as exuberant of bright ideas, and as active as ever. I call him the Plato of the house. He really is a man of a highly sublimated intellect, and piety is the element of his being. I could not agree with him in all his opinions; but he has much advanced in liberal and kind feelings towards those who differ from him; and when he vouchsafes to be simple, and to explain himself accurately, he makes near approaches in his views of the doctrines of grace to ourselves. His sentiments upon internal religion, and on the happiness to be tasted in a devout life, are worthy of the character I have assigned him, of the Christian Plato. He declines talking in the general circle upon the Roman

Catholic question; and his views respecting it are thus far modified, that, though retaining all his former opinions, and believing that every new concession would be attended with happy consequences, he fears the time is past at which they would prove beneficial in the degree he once anticipated.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Most private and confidential.]

October 19, 1824.

My dear Wilberforce,

You have heard from me in general that I have long been a disappointed applicant to the Lord Chancellor for certain official reforms which I deem indispensably necessary, to secure not only an impartial distribution of references among the Masters, but in connection with it, what is far more important, purity and impartiality in the discharge of the very delicate and momentous public duties of the Masters and their clerks. Three or four years have elapsed since these reforms were promised by his Lordship. I had on the last of my conferences with him an express renewal of this promise, and of its being carried into effect, as I understood him, before he closed his sittings for the present vacation; but he might possibly mean that it should be before the commencement of the next Chancery term, which is now at hand, the First Seal being

fixed for November 1. May I not again be disappointed! If I am, it will become my painful duty to state the case to the Chancery Commissioners very soon after they renew their sittings, and to seek a remedy from them; or, through their report, from higher authority. But I may possibly fail even in that resort. There is another, which, in that case, I should perhaps feel myself bound in conscience to try; viz. an application to the House of Commons, unless the Commissioners in an early report should disclose the full merits of the case, without recommending the specific remedy proposed by me; in which case it will be enough for my justification that the case is made known to Parliament.

But there is another possible event: I may be called to give an account of my stewardship before either termination of this business; and I feel it at length a duty to make some insurance against the possible consequence of such an event, the final failure of the proposed reform, from the non-discovery to the Commissioners and to Parliament of all the facts of the case, and especially some of a delicate kind that rest in my own knowledge. To prevent this, I now make it my request to you, that if I should die before that reform is effected, you will take proper measures for bringing either before the Commissioners or before Parliament, whichever you deem most proper, or before them in the first instance, and Parliament, if necessary, afterwards, the information to which I allude.

Such part of it as is of a public nature, or not entirely private, is already reduced into writing; and a copy of

it, sealed up and addressed to you, will be found among my papers designed for posthumous use, as will a statement of those private facts within my own knowledge, of which I have yet to make a record for this purpose.

To make the compliance with this request at once easier to your own feelings, and more influential with others in its effect, you have my permission, and even my request, that it may be done expressly in discharge of a duty of friendship, which I, in contemplation of death, imposed on you for the ease of my own conscience; and I think it will be better if you will enable yourself to add, that you at my request had bound yourself by promise to do so.

You may, however, if the case arises, and Lord Eldon is still Chancellor, put it in his Lordship's power, if you think fit, to relieve you from that duty, by making, without delay, that remedial Order of Court which he stood pledged for to me in my lifetime.

I am, my dear Wilberforce,

Ever very affectionately yours,

JAMES STEPHEN.

P. S. Pray seal this up, and write on the cover, "To be delivered, unopened, to Mr. Stephen, if he survives me."

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ.

[Private and confidential.]

Bath, October 20, 1824.

My dear Stephen,

I willingly promise compliance with the request contained in your letter just received of the 19th inst., in the very improbable event of my surviving you; and, in truth, I make the engagement the more cheerfully, because, should I be living and you withdrawn from this world, before the abuses in the Office of Masters in Chancery are amended, I should feel it due to your character, and therefore an obligation of friendship, to make it known, 1st, That you had been using your utmost endeavours to have the abuses corrected, so as to secure to the public the benefit without obtaining any credit for yourself; and, 2dly, That you did not allow yourself to profit from the official abuses while they did continue. It is not merely for the sake of your own reputation that I shall wish this truth to be made known, but because they who profess to act from religious principles are not always sufficiently exact in discharging beyond others (for our Saviour's question to his disciples was, "What do you more than others?") the moral and political duties of life.

I have sealed up your letter, and written on it, to be delivered to you, in the event of my death, unopened. Farewell.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

MRS. H. MORE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Barley Wood, Christmas Day.

My dear Friend,

May you have all the consolations, and blessings of this auspicious season!

Although somewhat improved in health, (not so in sleep,) since I had the great delight of seeing you and dear Mrs. W., yet as the continued inflammation in my hand still prevents me from holding a pen, I am obliged to write with that of my friend Miss Frowd. And first of all, I must thank Mrs. Wilberforce for her very kind letter: I am glad it has been in my power to afford her so much pleasure, by the surrender of my treasure.*

Forgive me, my dear friend, if I press upon you a subject very near my heart, which is to entreat you to consider the unspeakable importance of your own health and life to your family, your country, and to religion, and therefore to spare yourself as much as possible the fatigue and danger of applying too much to public and political concerns.

But there is a subject (if possible) of a still more interesting, as well as a more durable, nature — I mean the ardent wish, which I in common with all your friends have long indulged, that you should devote all your leisure hours to the preparing a memoir of your own life and times. This, done as you would do it, would be a treasure of inestimable value, not only to your own children and contemporaries, but to posterity. It is no

* A print of Mr. Wilberforce, which Mrs. W. desired might be bequeathed to her.

compliment to say, that few persons, if any, have been so distinguished as yourself both in the political and religious v orld — a union very rare, and almost new.

When I planted the barren hill above my house, which I did twenty-four years ago, and partly with my own hands, I was too much delighted with the employment, and compared myself with Jeroboam, who worshipped in groves and high places — I now complete the resemblance, for, like Jeroboam, I have a withered hand.

My kind love to Mrs. Wilberforce and all the domestic party, particularly my dear god-daughter. It is a comfort to you, that you will only have to hear this letter read, and not to answer it — as it requires none.

Forget not to pray for
Your faithful and affectionate Friend,
(the sign of) HANNAH MORE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ONE OF HIS SONS.

Elmdon House, September 17, 1825.

My dearest ——,

There are many friends, or rather acquaintances, to whom I should naturally introduce you, if I were myself at York, but to whom I could scarcely give you letters, circumstanced as you and they are at the present meeting. I do not think I ever talked about this same

musical festival, but I assure you I could not help feeling a certain longing to be present. Never was I more affected by music than even by the common service in the Minster. But I did not think I ought to incur the expense for such a gratification: so many enjoyments and comforts are profusely poured on me, that I may well be satisfied without paying so dear for an additional pleasure, though I own I think music and the taste for it are given to us for the very purpose of exciting the devotional feelings; and I always regret that in such performances as the Messiah, the attendant circumstances are so sadly calculated to damp and dissipate those spiritual affections, which the music of itself is fitted to call forth. How, beyond measure more, I have always thought should I enjoy it, if I were in a situation in which I could hear it all without being seen, or being obliged to chat, and express my admiration of this song, or of that chorus. But when music is performed in a cathedral, we should endeavour to compose the mind, to recollect ourselves, and strive to fancy we are listening to the sound

> " Symphonious of ten thousand harps that tune
> Angelic harmonies, the empyrean
> Ringing with hallelujahs."

I was called away yesterday, before I had finished my letter, and I have resumed my pen to-day (Sunday), and therefore I must make the remainder of my letter suitable to the day. And I know not how I can do it better, than by mentioning to you, what I intended saying before we parted, but neglected — I mean that, on reflection, I was not satisfied with the general strain

of our conversation on the Sunday, when we were all together. And as my dear children, to do them justice, are apt to take the tone from me, I fear I have been chiefly in fault. May the Lord forgive me! I am persuaded we should make it a chief part of our Sunday's occupation to cultivate a spiritual frame of mind, to confirm and strengthen our sense of the reality of invisible things. It is a great acquirement to be able to realize the unseen world; more especially before we engage in prayer we should endeavour to feel ourselves in the presence of our God and Saviour. I find my striving to do this especially effectual in producing a sense both of contrition and of awe, and of gratitude and confiding hope. And here let me remark, that I am persuaded, we are all sadly wanting to ourselves in not striving more to obtain spiritual joy. Oh we do not live up to our Christian state and privileges. If we examine the Acts of the Apostles and St. Paul's Epistles, we shall find how much Christian joy is spoken of as belonging naturally to real Christians. My very dear ——, do you strive, I beseech you, after this blessed affection, and be assured you may obtain it, if you duly strive. But my eyes are tired — I must go to prayer, where my dear —— will occupy a special place in my heart. Oh may my very dear son be carried safely through the ordeal through which he is now passing, and may he exhibit the life and character, and enjoy the hope and peace and joy of a Christian. I should never have done, if I were to go on till I had exhausted all the affectionate emotions which press for expression: I will absolutely close, begging you to present my kind

remembrances, and the assurance of my best wishes for the health and happiness of Sir Charles and his family, and entreating you to keep me in your heart, as your most affectionate father,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO Z. MACAULAY, ESQ.

Beckenham, February 8, 1826.

My dear Friend,

Io triumphe! or rather let us praise God who thus appears at last to bless our progress. I am strongly reminded of the remark of that kind, related I think by Clarendon, that it really seems our own fault that the popular voice was not before clamorous in our favour. But no—"There is a tide in the affairs of men," &c. &c.; and let us now, while it is thus favourable, push on with becoming zeal and diligence. If all were to be about half as industrious as you, (I speak literally, for in common parlance I should say a twentieth part,) we really should make a greater advance in this very session than I had ventured to anticipate. I should not be honest were I not to confess that I am conscious of a longing to have a share in the *mêlée*, but, I dare say, it is better as it is. No man has more cause than myself (few so much) to say, "Goodness and mercy have followed me all my days." I hope, and, indeed, from what Lushington said to me on the day of the meeting, I doubt

not, he will make good his case in the affair of Lecesne and D'Escoffery, and I am the more prepared for this issue by the account of his speech of last year, which, I presume, by your kind order, was lately sent to me; otherwise I was a little uneasy, from having found that the printed parliamentary papers had produced an impression unfavourable to the poor fellows in the mind of a very worthy and pious friend into whose hands I had put the papers.

But I am doing very wrong in thus wasting your time and my own eyesight, for which, alas! I have far more demands than I can satisfy; I must, however, express the great pleasure it gives me to find Mr. Smith's benevolent and honest mind and sound understanding borne away in the right direction. As to the Ladies' Society, I own I feel considerably uncomfortable about it, and, by the way, Babington thinks of it much as I do. Nevertheless, as it might appear strange if Mrs. W.'s name were not included, she consents to your putting it down, remembering that she resides in the country, and therefore cannot be expected to attend meetings. It is to the political character of the subject that my repugnance chiefly applies; to their mixing in stirring up petitions otherwise than by private discourse and *hoc genus omne.* There is not the same necessity for my daughter's name, and therefore I don't like to press her to give it. But they are come for my letter, and it will be too late for the post if not made up immediately; so farewell, and thank you again for all your kindness.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO HENRY BROUGHAM, ESQ. [now LORD BROUGHAM].

Kensington Gore, March 28, 1826.

My dear Sir,

I am persuaded that the deep interest you take in the success of our great cause would of itself render unnecessary any apology for my stating to you, frankly, the apprehensions I cannot but entertain of the effect of what has lately passed in the House of Commons relative to it. It is not, I assure you with perfect sincerity, that I do not consider your judgment superior to my own, but sometimes a by-stander is better qualified to take a just view of the state of the case than those who are actually playing the game. If my surmise is well grounded, it is to your consideration without doubt that I ought to submit it. I am glad, knowing the value of your time, that my trespass on it need not be long.

The sum of my fears is this: that a sufficiently clear and strong protest has not been made against the course which Mr. Canning still pursues, of trusting that the colonial assemblies may at length be brought to co-operate cordially in our views and measures for ameliorating the condition, with a view to the ultimate emancipation, of the slaves. It is not, doubtless, that I do not think with you that if the masters would really co-operate with us in good earnest, the practical execution of our design need but be left to the masters themselves; but when we consider that, with scarcely perhaps a single exception, they all consider emancipation as only another term for ruin, how can we possibly

expect, with any colour of reason, that they will cordially co-operate with us in giving effect to measures which we frankly avow to have emancipation for their end? I confess I have long thought, and indeed have often declared, that this is the point on which, practically speaking, the whole business turns; and I am the more uneasy now, because some hints that have dropped from different parties have suggested to my mind the probability that the planters, instead of persevering in their present absolute resistance to our measures, will assent to some of them in words, but with the real intention of evading the execution of them. They whose acquaintance with this whole subject is, in common parlance, but of yesterday, can scarcely have an adequate idea of the degree of hostility to all our plans which is generally felt in the West Indies. But you who, though not quite such a veteran as myself, have yet been so long conversant with the subject as to be familiar with all the proceedings respecting it that have taken place in Parliament within the last thirty years must, I am persuaded, think as I do on this important point. More especially a strong argument in confirmation of our views is afforded by the result of Mr. C. Ellis's address in 1796–1797. The address, you will remember, passed the House of Commons unanimously, though by us hopelessly, and in secret, growlingly. It was backed by the unanimous support of the whole West India body in this country, and was transmitted to the several governors by the Duke of Portland, a known partisan of their own, and was enforced on them by a private letter from Sir William Young, intimating the strong apprehensions

entertained by the most discerning friends of their cause, that unless they should conciliate the House of Commons by some amelioration of measures, several of which were suggested, the law for abolishing the slave trade would infallibly pass. Yet not a single colony adopted a single tittle of Mr. C. Ellis's proposals. Can any one then believe that they who would not adopt any of those measures at the instance of their friends, when they were thereby to obtain what they conceived to be the greatest benefit, will now adopt them to please their enemies, to insure what they all regard as synonymous with certain destruction?

I have been insensibly led into wasting your time and my own by urging these arguments: But even disinterested men in general, though for the most part wishing well to our cause, are not sufficiently aware that the whole really turns on our taking it upon ourselves to insure the execution of the ameliorating measures, and our not leaving the office to the colonial assemblies. The complaint in my eyes, which prevents my reading the newspapers, keeps me very imperfectly acquainted with their imperfect reports. Perhaps it may be owing, in some degree, to this cause, that I fear we appear to have acquiesced too much in Mr. Canning's plan of proceeding; and I cannot but feel the deepest anxiety that, when Parliament re-assembles, you should ascertain whether or not there is any ground for my alarm, and if there be, that you would make such a plain declaration of your opinions as will draw on our other friends to do the same. We never again shall have so favourable a juncture; the public feeling in our favour being now at its height, and the House of

Commons looking forward to a speedy appearance before its constituents.

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Bath, May 11, 1826.

My dear Friend,

Of all places actual, I had almost said of all places possible, Bath is the worst for me; considered as to the power it affords me of corresponding with my absent friends. But I will reserve till we meet the explanation of this position, only reminding you of the complaint in my eyes, and of the peculiarity attending it, that it is much the worst for the first five or six hours after my rising in the morning; so that I cannot use my pen at all till the inundation of visiters has broken in, or if a rainy day should lessen it, till the duty of drinking the water, and taking a requisite measure of exercise during and after it, calls me to the pump-room. But for these and other insuperable hinderances, you would have heard from me much sooner, the rather because I have experienced even in you, (to be honest, and to treat you with the frankness of friendship, when I am sure I feel its warmth,) that let those from whom I may wish to receive letters know ever so well the cause of their not hearing from me, yet they will never do more than give me letter for letter, and sometimes (and even here you I fear cannot plead Not guilty) they will even provokingly

apologise for the length of their letters, when they do write, or assign the weakness of my eyes as the cause of their not having written sooner. The expenditure of eyesight in reading a single letter, especially one of yours, (since you no more incur that peccadillo criminality by writing than by speaking, which I have heard you justly charge on some of our friends, of speaking in so low a voice as to be almost inaudible,) is so trifling compared with the pleasure I receive from the perusal, that *le jeu vaut bien la chandelle.*

Thursday evening. Thus far I had proceeded, when I was forced to lay down my pen and proceed to the pump-room, and thence to the ordinary drudgery of visiting and card leaving, followed to-day however by a walk on the top of Lansdown, whence the gorgeous display of rural beauties on the first bursting out of all the varieties of spring vegetation is truly magnificent. I have since, however, had my eyes regaled with an object that has given me still more pleasure. Though it is really curious that, at the very time when I was charging you in my last page with having sometimes provoked me by assigning kind consideration for my eyes or time as the cause of your silence, and more in the same spirit, you were renewing the offence, for you begin your letter by congratulating me in some sort for having escaped for weeks the receipt of a letter from you. But, my dear friend, most sincerely do I congratulate you on being enabled still to go on with unabated alacrity as well as vigour, in supplying the wants of your own populous circle, while through the world at large you are continually diffusing fresh light

and heat. I remember having always been delighted by a passage in Johnson's preface to Shakspeare, in which he defends the tragi-comedies of Shakspeare. I can truly say my feeling for the poor Shipham people is not less deep because I could not help laughing outright (ay, and repeatedly too,) at the pigs' meat in the close of your letter. Indeed it cheered Mrs. W. with a hearty laugh. But I must lay down my pen in a few minutes; let me therefore immediately execute the purpose for which I originally took it up, to inquire whether it would suit you better to see us in about twelve days, or in about three weeks, or a few days less. I should like to be at least one entire day under your roof, if it would not put you to inconvenience; but be honest with me, and be assured I never can misconstrue you, or doubt your kindness. Now for your poor neighbours—I really feel it kind in you to apply to me. You have not allowed me for several years to contribute any part of my quota, for such it ought to be accounted, and I consider myself your debtor to that amount. I wish I could make the note for 10*l.* that I enclose one for 100*l.*, but my four sons press heavy on me. You ask about Ogilvie's letter: few communications ever gave me half so much pleasure: I have carried it about with me ever since I received it from you, and now have it in my writing-box. I hear continually, blessed be God, of the good done by your last publication. There was light and heat in the dispersed effluxes (if I may so term them), but, brought together and concentrated, the effect seems increased beyond all expectation.

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO Z. MACAULAY, ESQ.

Brampton, July 27, 1826.

My dear Friend,

Lord C. and I read over No. 14. of the Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter, and were both of us pleased with it; indeed there are some parts of which we highly approve, such, for instance, as the appeal to Mr. Canning for the different way in which the petitions would have been described, had they been in favour of Catholic emancipation. But there are some particulars in which we concur in wishing for alterations. Lord C. disrelishes the boasting of such numerous petitions, but I believe on the whole, that it was right to mention them, and to vindicate them from the charges that had been falsely urged against them. We both, however, think that it would be better not to speak of the ladies' Anti-Slavery Associations for discouraging the use of slave-grown sugar.

Again, we think, and from a knowledge of Mr. Canning's character I cannot but believe the consideration of great importance, that more use should be made of the shameful misrepresentation which Mr. C. was unconsciously led into making to the House of Commons. Generally speaking, no man is more accurate in his facts, no man takes more pains to insure accuracy. What confidence can Mr. C. justly place in future in official men who could so grossly mislead him, and render him the instrument of misleading the House of Commons. It is difficult to suppose that any one who had examined the official papers could unintentionally

fall into such gross errors. In short, this occasion should be used for the purpose of leading Mr. Canning to distrust the source whence he derived that information.

My eyes having been very indifferent, I dictated the above, but let me use my own pen in assuring you that I am duly sensible of the unfairness of pressing so heavily on you. Yet you are the only efficient member of our body who possesses at once the requisite knowledge and ability for refuting the sophistries and contradicting the mis-statements of our adversaries. I might hope to do something but for the want of eyes, though I must say I am sadly forgetful now, especially of recent incidents; and what is more, I cannot make the same use of passages I notice in books that are read to me as if I had read them with my own eyes, and could know them at a glance.

I have met with Cymrie Williams's book here. It is manifestly, *à façon de parler*, a tour written in England. Farewell.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MISS MARY BIRD.

Hampstead, August 26, 1826.

My dear M.,

Your nephew's death is indeed a most affecting incident. Your letter reached me only four or five days ago, and conveyed to me the first tidings of it.

It is exactly of the same class as that of Sir Stamford Raffles, who had scarcely cast anchor for life in a quiet and most commodious harbour, after having been all his days experiencing the dangers of shipwreck, of pestilence, of fire, &c. &c., than his poor wife's not unreasonable hope of enjoying with him a tranquil calm during the evening of life (the calm sweetened by the former buffetings) was dashed to the ground, and, when better than usual, all at once he receives his summons into eternity. I heard with extreme pleasure that papers of his writing were found that indicated a consciousness that he might be thus suddenly called away.

I had poor R.'s letter read over to me again after I heard of his death. How affecting it is to think of our officers not attending the ordinances of religion, or rather not having the means of attending if they would, for fourteen years together. Yet his letter shows the benefit of early religious instruction. Instead of casting off respect for Christianity, he retains his early belief of its divine authority; and though late, "comes to himself," and reads the Scriptures. May God have had mercy on him! He is merciful and gracious, and kindly considers our disadvantages. . . . . I scarcely need tell you that I am scribbling away as fast as possible, that I may expend the less eyesight in proportion to what shall be written. But it is an assurance deliberately formed, I assure you, however hastily put on paper, that though you have lost one of your natural friends, and lost him under the most affecting circumstances, yet that you still have in myself one of the friends

of your youth, who doubts not that the cordial esteem and regard he has long entertained for you will cease only with his life. Neither of us, however, can look forward to a long continuance of our term in this world. Indeed, when it is considered that near forty years ago the great Dr. Warren declared, that my want of stamina was such that I could scarcely last a fortnight, it is wonderful that I should have completed my sixty-seventh year. May I be enabled to employ the remainder of life more to the glory of God than the last few years of it!

Farewell, my dear M. May our heavenly Father support and cheer you, and may we at length meet in that better world in which sin and sorrow will be no more!

Ever your sincere and affectionate friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

Private. Just let me add, that I trust you are comfortably provided as to pecuniary circumstances; and that you remember, if there should be need for it, that I am your natural resort, as your near relative and like-minded friend.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE REV. LEWIS WAY.

Elmdon House, near Solihull, Warwickshire,
May 31, 1827.

My dear Friend,

Again, and again, and again, I have been thinking of writing to you, but a complaint in my eyes, that has become habitual, and which allows me to use my pen but very little compared with the many claims on it, and to read still less, is a standing hinderance, and, except when I have some necessary call to address a friend, a sense of duty prompts me to abstain from so doing. When I have any business to transact with him, my amanuensis is at hand, but a mere reciprocation of affection, as the learned Doctor would have termed it, shrinks from the formality of dictation. But when my dear S., who is on the point of visiting Paris on his way into Switzerland, asked me if, besides commissioning him to give you assurances of my warm affection, I would not make him the bearer of a letter also, I could not say, No. O how I wish I were accompanying him.

My dear friend, I hear with unfeigned and great pleasure that you are receiving continual proofs that it is Providence that has shaped your course to Paris and detained you there. It is manifest to any reflecting mind, that in your person and circumstances there are coincidences that can scarcely be ever expected to unite, and all tending to render you peculiarly fitted to be useful in your present situation. Your being a gentleman, a man of fortune, and even

your genius, and — but I will not particularise, that I may not seem to flatter, and therefore I will only say, your *tout ensemble*, appears to manifest to any of your friends, who must naturally disrelish the idea of your abstraction from your native country, that were the *dramatis personæ* to be cast for a set of performers, Lewis Way would by acclamation be appointed to the post assigned to him. I have but one doubt, of which you must be a better judge than I am, for I can speak only on general grounds, and I only name it that I may be honest, and not leave you ignorant of an apprehension which suggests itself to my mind — it is, whether the place and its inhabitants are likely to be such as you would wish for your children. And on this I am sure you will both reflect yourself, and request the counsel of any Christian friend who is qualified to be of your cabinet on such an occasion. For it is not every good man that would be quite competent to such an office. This is all whispered into your private ear in the full confidence of friendship. And now, my dear friend, my eyes admonish me to lay down my pen, and I must obey. Let me first, however, beg you to present assurances of my affectionate regard to Mrs. Way and Co. May you be blessed, if it be the will of God, with a long course of usefulness and comfort, to be followed by a still better portion in a better world! Such is the cordial wish, and, D. V., shall be the prayer of,

My dear Way,

Your sincere and affectionate Friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. Pray be kind to dear S., and his fellow-traveller Mr. Anderson also, the eldest son of the old baronet of the name. Only talk to S. in French.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO HENRY BANKES, ESQ.

Highwood Hill, Middlesex, November 19, 1827.

My dear Bankes,

I thought I should have welcomed any incident that gave me an occasion for writing to you. But the newspaper has just now informed me of poor Tomline's death *chez vous*. I had lately heard from common rumour that he had been attacked by some dangerous disease, but the same account stated that his life was in no present danger, though there might be reason to fear for his intellect. There has been scarcely any intercourse between the bishop and myself for many years, though when we met we conversed with our old familiarity. But to you confidentially I will own that I never could forgive his never proposing prayer to our poor friend Pitt (how much forgotten in a few short years) till within about six hours before his dissolution: and I cannot but fear the effect of the bishop's language and conduct towards him was to suggest the persuasion that he (the bishop) was not dissatisfied with his state in the most important of all relations — a persuasion fairly to be gathered from the dedication of the bishop's book on Christian Theology (I mean the two volumes of Ele-

ments published in 1798). Still I cannot hear without emotion of the death of a man with whom we associated on such friendly terms in early life, and who never did any thing to offend me personally, though his general goings on were such as to give me real concern. I know not a man in England of whose attaining to an extreme old age one might be so justly confident, and the account of his illness and now of his decease coming on me so suddenly, I am naturally the more struck with it. Had he been long ill? Had he his faculties during his illness? I presume from his dying under your roof, the distance from Farnham not being great, that he had not recovered from his first seizure. But to a less painful topic. I hope you are yourself as well as when I saw you last, and I quite rejoice to know that your disease is not of a more dangerous nature, or of one that produces more suffering. I am the more sensible on this head, from what has lately happened to a very old and highly-valued friend of mine.....

I know not whether you may remember that in March last you suggested (what I own surprised me) Robinson's appointment to the premiership. What an unexpected *dramatis personæ* have we now on the stage! I hope Lord Eldon enjoys his liberty: he has worked so very hard, that though not fresh from the harness the feelings of Virgil's horse may very naturally be his own. I meant to tell you about my own tour, strange to say the first tour of pleasure I had taken in Yorkshire almost in my life, certainly for thirty years, but to save the post I must break off. Tell me how you are yourself, and as much else as you will, both

personally and *de republicâ*. If any of the family are with you, I beg my best remembrances, and I am ever, my dear Bankes,

Very sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ——.

Highwood Hill, Middlesex, November 28, 1827.

My dear Sir,

I am unaffectedly sorry for having subjected you to the obligation of using your pen when, from the state of your health, you could not write without suffering.

I am now conscious that I suffered myself too easily to presume that you must be sufficiently acquainted with the case of Mr. Macaulay. Let me begin by assuring you, from an intimate knowledge of Mr. Macaulay of between thirty and forty years, that he is a man of very superior talents, and both as a public and private man of no less worth; indeed I believe him to be a real Christian. Being one of a large family, the children of a clergyman in the west of Scotland, he was sent out early in life to the West Indies, and from our high estimate of his character and talents, our late friend Mr. Henry Thornton, who was then at the head of the Sierra Leone Company, .. a society formed for the improvement of Africa, and as a refuge for a number of negro slaves whom the British Government had encouraged to leave their masters

during the American revolutionary war, . . sent for him from Jamaica, that he might occupy some respectable station in the new colony.... Let me remind you, in a parenthesis, that when the colony was formed we believed (on Mr. Pitt's authority) that there was a strong probability of a twenty years' continuance of peace, and Parliament had then given us reason to believe the slave trade should be immediately abolished. Had these confident expectations been realised, the fate of the colony would have been very different; and perhaps the only fault was, its not being dissolved when the French war broke out, and Parliament flinched from its decision as to the slave trade, though I know not how we could have dissolved it consistently with the safety of the colonists whom Government had already brought there....

Mr. Macaulay on coming to England was for some time domesticated with Mr. H. Thornton, who thought so highly of him as to propose that he should be appointed governor of Sierra Leone, as he soon after was, with the universal approbation of the directors. In this number were then, Lord Teignmouth, Mr. Charles Grant, Granville Sharp, I think Mr. Eliott (Pitt's brother-in-law), myself, and several other public men. While there, Mr. Macaulay acted so as to obtain our utmost confidence and approbation, being sometimes placed in circumstances of extreme difficulty and danger; and when he returned, he brought with him a number of the young natives whom he had kept in his own house while in Africa, superintending their education. From the opportunity he had possessed of

acquiring information concerning the state of the slaves in the West Indies, and of the slave trade, of the character of the natives, &c. in Africa, he naturally became a sort of *primum mobile* in our African and West Indian system; and though soon after marrying, with the prospect, gradually realised, of a large family, with impaired health, and having little or no property, and therefore looking for his family support to a mercantile business in which he engaged, he was, nevertheless, always most profuse in giving freely his time and money too, as well as his extraordinary talents and experience, to the support of the common cause. In such a world as this, it was but too natural that he should become a butt for the shafts of party calumny and malice; and I am sorry to say, that the efforts made to injure his character, though by the grossest falsehoods, were for a time but too successful. The newspapers which espoused the cause of the West Indians, who have paid very liberally for support, were peculiarly forward in diffusing these calumnies; and after sustaining much abuse, Mr. Macaulay was at length advised by his friends to institute a prosecution. This being of course resisted by all the arts of dilatoriness with which the law abounds, more especially by assertions concerning Mr. Macaulay's conduct in the West Indies thirty years before, the truth or falsehood of which charges could only be ascertained on the spot, the suit is not even yet completely ended, but the expenses have already amounted to more than two thousand pounds, though we are assured the solicitors have been very moderate in their charges. Considering

all the circumstances of the case, more especially that it was only in consequence of his efficiency and zeal in our cause that he was attacked and subjected to this heavy charge, it would manifestly have been utterly unjust if the friends of the negroes had not made common cause with him; the rather, indeed, because it may be truly affirmed that his family had already lost much by his attaching himself so nobly to us. It was therefore agreed, that application should be privately made to those who were best able to contribute, he himself being allowed only to subscribe one share to the common fund... the permission so to do being granted to him whenever it should be notified to him that the requisite sum had been nearly raised, for the intention to make the effort has not yet been communicated to him. I will give you below a list of those who have agreed to come forward, among whom I understand the solicitor who conducts the cause to be himself one.

Yours, &c.

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I will mention one instance of Macaulay's generosity. By a combination of sagacity and perseverance, he detected an attempt made by a high diplomatic character to render an apparent act of public duty the means of carrying off a number of slaves from Africa to Brazil: — the vessel was prosecuted, and the profits to the seizer (Macaulay himself) were of the value of above 1200*l.*, which, however, he gave up to the Custom House officers for the benefit of the general cause.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO S. HOARE, ESQ., JUN.

Hampstead Heath, Sunday night, July 27, 1828.

My dear young Friend,

I am persuaded my troubling you with a few lines will need no apology from me, when you know that your dear mother suggested to me the idea of so doing. Yet I hope it is needless for me to assure you (and yet this must be my main purpose) that I take great and sincere interest in your goings on.

Your dear father was about your own age, I remember, when by his father I was introduced to him, and I formed a confident hope that he would in after-life become a good man; consequently a blessing to his country, having the root of happiness within himself, and the fruit when ripened to gratify and refresh others. I rejoice to hear that you are endeavouring to use all the means of improving yourself which Providence throws in your way; but I most of all rejoice to hear that you manifest in these your early years a disposition to enter into and press forward in that narrow way which leadeth unto life eternal. We have the highest authority for saying that you will find it a way of pleasantness and peace; for you will look for your happiness to Him who can even give "songs in the night," and in the midst of outward trials can give light and joy to the inner man! But I must lay down my pen, assuring you that it has been my wish and shall be my prayer that you may be an honour to your name, a comfort to the advancing years of those you love most dearly (blessed be God

this is an enjoyment of which I can speak from my own experience). May you enjoy a protracted course of usefulness and comfort, to be followed by a still better portion in a better world! Accept this assurance from

Your affectionate old Friend,

But not so old as affectionate,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Docketted: Private. — Dear Stephen *suo more* affectionate and pious.]

Kensington Gore, Wednesday evening,
December 3, 1828.

My dear Wilberforce,

I am happy and thankful to hear that you have returned home in improved and comfortable health. On my return from Missenden to chambers on Monday, I was tantalised with an invitation from Macaulay to meet you at dinner, of which I could not avail myself. I might have broken through my rule on such an occasion, though not yet willing to relinquish it; but was obliged, by weighty reasons, to come here as soon as I could quit my office; and though I meant to call in my way, or rather out of my way, found myself too late to do so. In the morning I was equally unfortunate, having slept so late in consequence of having risen for my journey the day before at five, that I could barely save my distance at chambers. I was half angry with you for not having apprised me before hand that you

were to be for a short time within my reach. Till the receipt of M.'s letter I supposed you still at Bath.

You probably do not recollect, my dear friend, but I still do, and with affectionate gratitude, a visit that you made me in Sloane Street this day exactly thirty-four years ago. It was a very useful one. This is one of the anniversaries on which I remember sorrows that this life cannot compensate, but trace from them the wonderful and beneficent ways of that divine benefactor, who,

"Behind a frowning Providence, oft hides a smiling face."

I remember an incident that occurred just as you entered my room, and which I believe I told you of at the time, that might almost give one confidence in the *sortes Virgilianæ*. I had for the first time caught up a book to turn the current of my dismal and intolerable thoughts. It was a Virgil, which one of my boys had brought from school and left in the room, and I strangely enough opened on that affecting passage in which the spirit of the departed Creusa appears to her distracted husband, while searching for her amidst the ruins of burning Troy, and comforts him with the predictions of future blessings from his loss. The *regia conjux* had then no comfort or supposable meaning for me, though the general spirit of the passage, connected as it was with my own sudden and dreadful privation, and with the unseen purposes of Providence in such events, gave a soothing turn to my thoughts. I have since, on the recollection of it, applied the *regia conjux* to one of whom I had then never heard, and whose royalty was of the

best kind, and is now, I doubt not, marked with a celestial crown. Nor was your coming at that crisis, and your subsequent compassionate and affectionate conduct, a needless link in the chain of events that led to my union with her. I sincerely wished for a long time after to drop all intercourse with you and the friends that surrounded you. I disliked all society except that of my poor orphans and the kind relations who took the charge of them. I wished and expected soon to die; and besides, had a blamable aversion for the company of those who stood higher in rank or fortune than myself, especially for the Pittite aristocrats, whom I generally met at your table. But you, my kind friend, would not suffer me to forsake you; and the recollection of your tender, generous conduct at that crisis of my afflictions was a tie that bound my heart to you, till I found, two or three years after, another bond of attachment.

Give my love to Mrs. W., and whatever other members of your dear family are now at Highwood Hill.

Ever yours very affectionately,

J. STEPHEN.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ONE OF HIS SONS.

Highwood Hill, Middlesex, February 9, 1829.

My very dear ——,

If you do not possess a set of Venn's sermons, I must send them to you, and recommend them, not for your parishioners' use, but for your own. They contain

much good sense, and a strain of true piety. He was a man, for whose writings, it will, I doubt not, be a strong recommendation to you, that I entertained for the man himself the highest esteem and affection. There was in him a singular compound of the pathetic and the humorous. He was very shy, as is commonly the case with those who most deserve that we should take pains to obtain their friendship; but when you did succeed, you obtained a prize well worth the price you had paid, how great soever, of pains and perseverance, for it. I am sorry to find that two of the books you wished to be sent to you, Eusebius and Gibbon's Answer to his opponents, have been sought for in vain.

I hope you are reading Richmond's Life. He was an excellent man, and without any superiority of talents or acquirements was eminently useful. Indeed, the pains he took with his parishioners indicated such a zeal in his Master's cause, as could scarcely fail to impress the hearts of his flock with a sense of the interest he took in their well-being. It slipped out of my mind while I was writing the last sentence, that Lord Sheffield, the editor of Gibbon's posthumous works and his great friend, assured me one day when sitting next him at Lambeth on a public day, that Gibbon assured him that he had not at first any idea of attacking Christianity in those chapters — "*credat Judæus? — haud ego.*"

By the way, I have purchased, deeming it a duty, Bowdler's expurgated edition of Gibbon's History. "*Virginibus puerisque canto.*" Bowdler's work deserves encouragement. . . . . I have been interrupted repeatedly whilst writing this letter, hence my forgetting just now

that I was speaking of Mr. Richmond's pastoral diligence. One summer for several months we were only four miles from Turvey, Richmond's parish — he then habitually met his parishioners four, if not five, times in the week. One evening he would read some book, and make remarks upon it; *e. g.* the Pilgrim's Progress; on another he would pray and sing hymns. I have been at one of these evening meetings, and have seen a barn, fitted up a little for the purpose, filled with the peasantry in the smock frocks in which they had been labouring. I forget whether or not you have Scott's Life — it is well worth your habitual perusal. Have you Chalmers's Scripture References? I mean the first tract. I will send you it as soon as I can. I will enclose a bank note for 5*l.* for your poor, and I beg you will always tell me honestly when you want aid to your charity fund. I am forced to scribble in extreme haste. My very dear ——, I daily pray twice for you, and so I hope you do for me. Oh! prayer, prayer is the grand maintainer of the spiritual life. It is on the account of its curtailing or hurrying over your private prayers that I have always been jealous of early hours for family prayers at home, and of late rising.

May God in Christ bless you and yours in your souls, and yourself in your ministrations! is the earnest wish and prayer of your affectionate father,

W. Wilberforce.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ONE OF HIS SONS.

Highwood Hill, Middlesex, February 18, 1829.

My dear ——,

Though you live in a place and in circumstances which may not afford many striking matters for narrative, yet where correspondents love each other as affectionately as we do, matter can never be wanting. It would interest me to hear how you are going on in your parish, what you preach about, how you are received by your flock, and in what state you find them, both in what respects their spiritual state and their temporal condition, (my fingers just now are cold, and I have so indifferently formed a pen, that it keeps slipping about, a circumstance fully entitled to a place in the list of the minor miseries,) at what hours you breakfast, dine, &c.; in short, send me a journal of your ordinary days, for I presume they are one very much like the other.

You hear, I presume, the bustle at Oxford. I own I think they are using Peel harshly. I well remember from experience, that one of the most painful trials of principle to which a public man is exposed is when his sense of duty prompts him to change a course of conduct he has long deemed it his duty to pursue, conscious that he will thereby bring on him not only the hostility and reproaches, but the gibes and jeers, of his old friends, perhaps incur a breach of friendship long and dear. I cannot but believe that the Duke of Wellington is convinced that if we were still to pursue the

course we have been taking for years a civil war would be the consequence; and as he is a man not likely from delicacy or fear to be unwilling to go to war, and from sagacity and experience better fitted than any other man living for forming a just calculation of the result, and particularly as he is not likely from timidity to see the danger in too strong a light, I am disposed to give more weight to his judgment than to that of any other person.—The post is on the point of departure.

Ever affectionately yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MR. J. G. BUSBY.

Highwood Hill, Middlesex, January 23, 1830.

Sir,

I sit down to answer a letter from you, of so old a date as the 16th September, 1829. It was detained somewhere, so that I have not had it by me long; and though I am sorry to say I have nothing welcome to communicate to you, I do not like even to appear to neglect a poor man's case, and therefore enclose you a letter which I have received from the proper officer, through the good offices of my friend Mr. Legge. It is not to be wondered at that the poor old man forgot so small an amount of prize money. I am glad to remember that he lives in a town where old worn-out sailors are properly prized and befriended. You will be

so kind as to communicate to him these particulars. I was glad to hear that the poor old man had got safe home again; for when I saw him in London, near two years ago, he seemed so decrepid as well as deaf, as to afford great reason to fear that his sudden disappearance had arisen from some fatal accident having befallen him.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ.

Highwood Hill, Middlesex, August 7, 1830.

My dear Stephen,

First, your letter shall be laid up in safety, and next, I really am in better spirits about our cause than I have been for some time past. It is not merely that we have gained, as I believe, several members by the new elections, though that, I trust, is something, but I cannot help believing that any government that will be now formed in France will be favourable to the real, practical, entire extinction of the slave trade; and very soon after the meeting of our Parliament an address must be moved, praying the Crown to concert with the foreign courts for the carrying into execution of the various treaties. An engagement to abolish has now been contracted by every power in Europe, and by Brazil in the

New World, and many of the South American republics, and also Mexico, either have prohibited or will prohibit it. It would be a grand achievement — just a measure to hold out a strong inducement to the new member for Yorkshire (for such I doubt not Brougham now is) to move for a congress of the great powers of Europe, or of the world, to arrange the method of carrying this great measure into execution. I really believe that his election for Yorkshire, on the ground of his being the advocate of the slaves, will have a powerful effect. You see my prospect is not so dark as yours; yet I well remember your letters. I forget the signature in which you accumulated a number of instances in which the scourge appeared to have been already inflicted on the chief provokers of the penal vengeance of the Almighty, by their long-continued devastations in Africa. I hope you have those letters in safe custody. In forming our plan of operations, I trust we shall pay due regard to its manifest expediency, whether with a view to our own chieftains, or to the rank and file in the House of Commons who were made to declare themselves friendly to our cause.

I hope you will let us see you before you go to Missenden for the summer. We naturally wish to see our dear ——'s future field of operations, and shall probably, please God, go to him in the Isle of Wight ere long, for I shall wish to take an autumnal course of Bath water. While it pleases God to continue this crazy tenement, it appears right to endeavour to keep it fit for some occupation. But, alas! my dear Stephen, I am a most unprofitable servant. I assure you the

consideration often lowers my spirits sadly, but—I was here forced to lay down my pen, and have only time to say, May every blessing be your portion!

So ever prays

W. WILBERFORCE.

So Brougham is M. P. for Yorkshire.

LORD HOLLAND TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Holland House, October 1, 1830.

My dear Sir,

I enclose a Moniteur at the request of Lord John Russell, and his letter to explain the object of it, not only as an old fellow-labourer, though a humble one, in the vineyard, but even in a capacity you do not equally respect, that of a West India proprietor. I am most anxious to see the Abolition enforced, and agree entirely with Lafayette that this is a most favourable moment for enforcing it, by making it piracy according to the law of nations, and authorising all armed ships of whatever state to seize all, under whatever flag they may be, who are engaged in that traffic. You will do me the justice to believe that on the other parts of the subject I am not less sincere in wishing to see the object accomplished, though I do not always agree in the means of attaining it. Perhaps, being both an old abolitionist and a West India proprietor, I may take Sir Roger de Coverley's liberty of censuring both, and I own, if the

former would talk a little less, and the latter do a little more, I think the progress to the end in view would be much more safe, and I believe more rapid, too, than it is likely to become in the present state of irritation between the parties. Pray forgive me for allowing my pen to run on so much. It is long since I had the pleasure of seeing you, and I am gratified at the opportunity of recalling myself to your recollection.

Yours truly,

VASSALL HOLLAND.

Both Lady Holland and myself were delighted to hear so favourable an account of you from Sir James Mackintosh.

Z. MACAULAY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

London, November 26, 1832.

My dear Friend,

I have to give you some good news as to our cause. Sir James Graham has had an interview with Buxton. He saw him as the delegate of the cabinet. The interview was satisfactory. The Government feel that some effectual step for extinguishing slavery must be taken this session, and they wish us to say what that shall be. They admit that it is now in our power to dictate terms, with which, in the present state of feeling in this country, if not unreasonable, they might be forced to comply. But it is their real wish to be able to

concur with us, and they therefore desire us to state our plan. If it is safe and practicable, they will adopt it as their own, and carry it through the House. The basis of it, it is felt not merely on account of the public feeling at home, but on account of the state of the islands and the violence of the planters, must be emancipation under due precautionary regulations.

Buxton at once explained to them our views, and gave them the following outline: — This country must go to the expense of an efficient paid magistracy and a strong police, and even an armed force to back that police, in order to keep not merely the blacks, but still more the whites, in complete submission.

This police will mainly consist of the free now in the islands, aided by the most intelligent and religious of the present slaves.

The slaves shall remain as they are for a year or two; but be delivered wholly from the arbitrary power of the master and from the whip, and shall work five days in the week for reasonable wages, to be fixed by protectors, Saturday and Sunday being their own. The working hours of the day shall be nine or ten, and all beyond that, and all night-work, shall be voluntary on the part of the labourer, and paid for by agreement. At the end of a year, or two years at most, the present slave will be freed from the necessity of working for his former master, except by his own choice and by mutual contract, and may contract with whom he will and for what wages he can get, or may buy, or rent, or cultivate, land for himself. In short, he will then be free, but

only bound to work in some way and for some one, and wholly to maintain himself and family by industry.

In all other respects, the laws for black and white, as to person and property, connubial rights, evidence, &c. are to be the same, except as to restrictions for a time on idleness and vagrancy, which are to be met chiefly by mulcts, and labour on the tread-mill, for example.

Schools and religious instruction to be made paramount objects.

All this to be accompanied by a loan to the planters, to relieve them from their heavy incumbrances.

The question of compensation to be equitably considered, (after a term of years, say five or ten,) as to the profitable working of the old or new system.

All further sales of human beings, or separations of families, to cease at once.

Sir James Graham not only did not shrink from all this, but said it was the very line in which his ideas and those of his colleagues had moved, and he thought Government would be ready to go with us generally. He wished the outline, when ready, to be at once submitted to Government for consideration, and he had little doubt of our coming to an amicable agreement. I have since conferred with ——, and he thinks things are ripe for obtaining nearly the full extent of our wishes. We shall of course lose no time in propounding our propositions.

I fear I make myself imperfectly understood; but the main features of the plan are the substitution of law

and wages for compulsory labour and arbitrary punishment — with schools and ministers.

All this is of course strictly private at present — but I could not withhold from you our raised expectations.

In haste, ever yours,

Z. MACAULAY.

Z. MACAULAY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

May 15, 1833.

My dear Friend,

This day ten years ago the abolition of slavery was first made a question in Parliament. Last night its death-blow was struck. I send you a copy of the debate. Stanley's allusion to you was quite overpowering, and electrified the House. My dear friend, let me unite with you in thanks to God for this mercy.

I have really been much occupied, and unable to write — but I have mourned over Sargent ——, and felt all your trials.

Ever yours affectionately,

Z. MACAULAY.

THE END.

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